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The works of William Makepeace Thackeray

William Makepeace Thackeray

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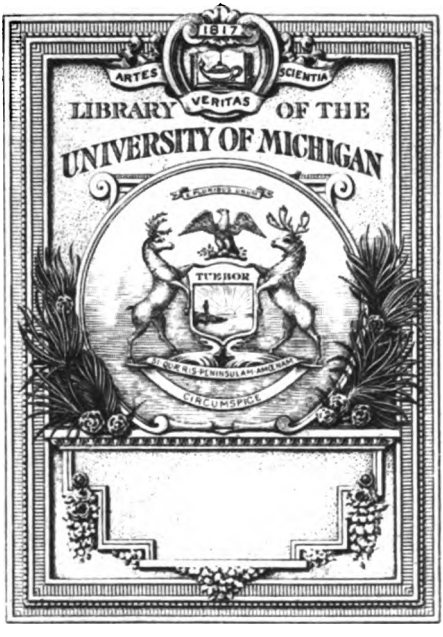

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THE BIOGRAPHICAL EDITION

OF

THE WORKS OF

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

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THE WORKS

OF

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTIONS BY
HIS DAUGHTER, ANNE RITCHIE

IN THIRTEEN VOLUMES

VOLUME XII

THE WOLVES AND THE LAMB
LOVEL THE WIDOWER
ROUNDABOUT PAPERS
DENIS DUVAL

LONDON
SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE
1903
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LITTLE DENIS DANCES AND SINGS BEFORE THE NAVY GENTLEMEN

[Page 448

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THE WOLVES AND THE LAMB

LOVEL THE WIDOWER

ROUNDABOUT PAPERS

AND

DENIS DUVAL

BY

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR
FREDERICK WALKER, AND CHARLES KEENE

LONDON
SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE
1903

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INTRODUCTION

TO

ROUNDABOUT PAPERS, DENIS DUVAL, ETC.

1860–1863

I

ROUNDABOUT PAPERS

THE "Roundabout Papers" might serve for a diary of the last years of my father's work.

One by one the times and the occasions recur as one looks over the list of these short essays which seem so identified with him. The first of the series devised for the first of the *Cornhills*, "On a Lazy, Idle Boy," was begun in the large low sitting-room of the little inn at Coire where we were detained—for many weary days. My brother-in-law, Leslie Stephen, has since told me that he saw my father and my sister for the first time sitting on a bench in the garden of the Baur au Lac Hôtel at Zürich, to which we moved next, and where the article was finished. How much happiness it might sometimes give one, if one could recognise lifelong friends to be in the people who seem to pass one by, and yet who are coming back—for good.

As for the "Two children in black," I can see them still, as they first got into the railway-carriage with us, with their charming mother. We made friends all day long in the train to Heidelberg, and at night we went to the same inn—their name was written with ours in the travellers' book. "Madame —— avec ses enfants."

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I have forgotten the name, though I remember the phrase. How sorry my father was for the poor little boys, and how often we speculated as to their history!

This paper opens with a passage about Montaigne. "Montaigne and 'Howel's Letters' are my bedside books. If I wake at night, I have one or other of them to prattle me to sleep again. They talk about themselves for ever, and don't weary me. I like to hear them tell their old stories over and over again." My father had a favourite old Montaigne which he kept by his bedside.

As far as I can remember, I do not believe that he had any particular feeling for special editions. He used a cheap, battered old Boswell with double columns; the companion with whom, as he said, he could have been quite content to dwell upon that problematical desert island. He also liked his shabby, worm-eaten copies of Johnson's poets. Milton's Sonnet to Shakespeare in Johnson's poets was one of the last things he ever read. When he did not sleep well, sometimes in summer-time he used to get up very early, about four o'clock—long before the house was astir—and we would come down to breakfast and find him standing reading by his bookshelves.

One can feel as one reads how he enjoyed these expeditions into book-land, the long rambles in that wide, inexhaustible country; sometimes he seemed to pause and look about, and to gaze at his favourite prospects. He returned to his best beloved quotations again and again. There is one he used to speak of with special admiration—Goldsmith's parable of the hunted hare:—

> "Like as a hare whom hounds and horns pursue
> Pants to the place from whence at first he flew,
> I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
> Here to return—and die at home at last."

My father's memory, though partial, was very clear. I remember Mr. Kinglake once saying that his quickness of apprehension was most remarkable, and equalled by that of very few people. If he read a book he turned page after page without stopping at all, in a rapid methodical way, and he used to say that from long habit he could glean the contents of each page as he glanced at it. It was only the other day that an eminent

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politician of this present time declared to a friend that it was almost impossible to him to read less than three lines at once, and some such power must have belonged to my father's short-sighted eyes.

The third "Roundabout," "On Ribbons," has been lately reprinted in an admirable little newspaper called the *Britannia*, in which for a penny you can read something better worth remembering than stale histories of present crimes and vulgarities. Things, happily no less true, but more cheering and more amusing to contemplate—seamanship, athletics, speeches of good import, active doings of every kind.

The number of this periodical which quotes the "Roundabout" "On Ribbons," warmly endorses my father's suggestion of an order of Britannia for seamen.

How well I remember the writing of the paper "On some late Great Victories," for the sixth number of the *Cornhill*, and its humorous and amusing description of a Roman triumphal procession, and of "six great complete and undeniable victories achieved by the corps which the editor of the *Cornhill Magazine* has the honour to command. . . ."

"On the 13th day of April last I went to see a friend in a neighbouring crescent," are the first words of this "Roundabout." The friend was my grandmother, who lived for a couple of years in Brompton Crescent, and remained there until my grandfather's death, when she came home to us. My father paid her a daily visit on his way into town.

There is one personal "Roundabout Paper" "On a Chalk Mark on the Door," which recalls a housekeeper's confusion when she read the paper in the *Cornhill*, and went out to look at the mark —she can still remember it—a sort of V in red chalk on the door-post in Onslow Square.

The essay on a "Thorn in the Cushion" is very well known and often quoted. I found a packet of thorns only the other day in an old box where I was looking for figs, and felt that a quarter of a century had not quite swept away the sting of these spinulæ. Sometimes, as my father says, the letters contained not mere thorns, but bludgeons.

"Round about the Christmas Tree" is written in good spirits,

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and about pleasant things. Bobby Mistletoe, who had been staying with us for a week, and "sleeping mysteriously in the bath-room," may remember the incident, and the slight pecuniary transactions alluded to. I wonder if he remembers the punch which Mr. O'Morgan pronounced too weak, and the Pantomime. I myself can bear witness to a winter's walk in the Zoological Gardens, with certain childish friends of those days, now turned to grey-headed friends. My father was always happy in the Zoological Gardens. "If I have cares in my mind," he says, "I come to the Zoo, and fancy they don't pass the gate." On this occasion as he walked along he made up that well-known poem :—

> "First I saw the white bear, then I saw the black ;
> Then I saw the camel with a hump upon his back ;
> Then I saw the grey wolf, with mutton in his maw ;
> Then I saw the wombat waddle in the straw ;
> Then I saw the elephant a-waving of his trunk ;
> Then I saw the monkeys—mercy, how unpleasantly they—smelt !"

Our playfellows, the children of Sir Henry Cole, were with us, and the youngest boy caught up the rhyme, and ran about repeating the last verse with its various readings, sometimes preferring one, sometimes the other.

"Tunbridge Toys" was written in the summer of 1860, when we were staying at Tunbridge Wells in an old wooden house at the foot of Mount Ephraim. The drawing-room windows looked across a garden towards the common. "De Juventute" was also written there. I remember my father showing me the manuscript at the time, and as I read it now everything comes back. The grand-parents were living in the ground-floor sitting-room ; we were established overhead, with a couple of puppies, whose antics were the chief events of those peaceful days. The puppies were called Gumbo and Saidie, after the two nigger boys in "The Virginians." Gumbo had a fine time of it, driving vast herds of sheep before him across Rustington Common. Saidie was of a meeker disposition. When we went abroad later in the year, Saidie returned to Onslow Square, and Gumbo was sent away to live with our friends the Synges, a present for the aforesaid Bobby Mistletoe. I cannot help describing here the little story my father told us of Gumbo's behaviour when they met again on our return from abroad. Gumbo, in his black-

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REHEARSAL OF "FREISCHÜTZ"

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and-tan coat, was quietly passing the time on the pavement in front of the house in Pimlico, when he saw the hansom-cab driving up the middle of the street with my father inside; and with one wild leap from the curb-stone he sprang into the advancing cab and landed safe on my father's knees, knocking off his spectacles, and licking his face all over.

"The Roundabout" called "Notes of a Week's Holiday" represents a real week and a real holiday, and one of the happiest.

We went to the play during that little journey and saw a wonderful performance called *Le Secret de Miss Aurore*, of which the sketch on the following page is a reminiscence. Christmas sports were introduced to charm the squire. The sketch of the scene from the *Freischütz* which is also given belongs to some earlier holiday-time.

"Screens in Dining-rooms" was prompted by an article in the *Saturday Review* reproducing a gossiping one sent from an American newspaper. My father wrote to Mr. George Smith:—

"My dear S.,—I have been lying awake half the night about that paper in a sort of despair; but I think I have found a climax dignified and humorous enough at last, Heaven be praised, and that our friend won't sin again.—Yours ever, W. M. T."

I suppose some people disliked my father—perhaps he thought there were more than really existed. He was a diffident man, sensitive, and easily wounded, especially by any one for whom he had a regard. "We shall never be allowed to be friends, that is clear," he says once, speaking of the reports concerning him and Dickens. A friend of Mr. Dickens said one day, "D—— Thackeray," which another friend felt ought to be immediately reported in everybody's interest.*

* There were happily other episodes more worthy of being reported, this being but one among them.

"*March* 23, 1855.

"My dear Thackeray,—I have read in the *Times* to-day an account of your last night's lecture, and cannot refrain from assuring you in all truth and earnestness, that I am profoundly touched by your generous reference to me. I do not know how to tell you what a glow it spread over my heart. Out of its fulness I do entreat you to believe that I shall never forget your words of commendation. If you could wholly know at once how you have moved me and how you have animated me, you would be the happier, I am certain.—Faithfully yours ever, Charles Dickens."

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One celebrated author put him into a book with unfavourable comments—but it must be confessed that my father had written "Codlingsby."

Hop feast and dance of peasant girls in the neighbourhood of Beckenham

Paris. La Secret de Mme Aurore

PEASANT GIRLS DANCING.

In "The Notch on the Axe" he describes a favourite Sir Joshua print. "When your spirits are low," he writes, "her bright eyes

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shine on you and cheer you. She never fails to soothe you with her speechless prattle. . . . You love her—she is alive with you." The print is that charming little winter-piece representing the little Lady Caroline Montagu, afterwards Duchess of Buccleuch. She is standing in the midst of a winter landscape

ROUGH STUDY OF MOTHER AND CHILD.

wrapped in muff and cloak, and she looks out of the picture with a smile so exquisite that a Herod couldn't see her without being charmed.

For this little Lady Caroline he had a special fancy.

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One of the last of the "Roundabouts" is called "On some Carp at Sans Souci," but all the same it is dated from Kensington. My father had taken a fancy to a little old woman who used to come sometimes to tea at Palace Green, and he made her the heroine of this particular paper. A friend who discovered her in a workhouse used to carry her some occasional tokens of good-will. "Ah, you rich people!" says the old lady, "you are never without a screw of snuff in your pockets." The old woman used to come

CHILDREN'S HEADS.

to tea and chatter away to my father when she met him in the hall; she curtsied with equal deference to the page-boy, who treated her with more haughtiness perhaps. Our page-boy had serious views and doubts about her way of life. "John," says the "Roundabout Paper," "when Goody-Two-Shoes comes next Friday, I desire she may not be disturbed by theological controversies. . . . Make her comfortable by our kitchen hearth, set that old kettle to sing by our hob, warm her old stomach with nut-brown ale and a toast in the fire. Be kind to the poor old school-girl of ninety, who has had leave to come out for a day of Christmas holiday."

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The last of the "Roundabouts" is called "Strange to say, on Club Paper." The will of an old friend, Lord Clyde, was written on the Athenæum note-paper, and this was remarked upon, and my father in turn remarked upon the criticism.

"The proofs and MSS. of this little sermon have just returned from the printers, and as I look at the writing I perceive, not without a smile, that one or two of the pages bear, 'strange to say,' the mark of a club of which I have the honour to be a member." My father's club was so much a part of his daily life, that it seemed at last to be a part of his home; and though he was ill and suffering, he went there up to the end and worked there at his favourite table, and met the familiar faces that he liked to see, and the friendly silences as well as the friendly greetings of his old associates. It was there he met Mr. Dickens, on that occasion of which Mr. Dickens himself has written, when my father was coming away for the last time from his accustomed haunt.

It has been truly said that in life ideas are the only facts that last. Other things pass and disappear, but ideas grow and grow in people's hearts, as time goes on and men learn their long lessons, and accept the teaching of life. And so, perhaps, the best cairn or monument to the memory of a good man is that one which his friends put up to him in spirit and in truth. As one looks back at the warm expressions at the time of my father's death, one feels how much was meant by them. Here is Charles Dickens writing from his heart, and noting the little familiar things which the mind first turns to in a bereavement. "An excellent way with boys," he says among the rest, and then he goes on to speak of other characteristics—his quiet endurance, his unselfish thoughtfulness for others, his munificent hand. And then come Mr. Trollope's words of affectionate and true feeling. "He carried his heart-strings in a crystal case," he wrote. And there is a record of his saying as he spoke of a future life: "If I thought I should never see old Thackeray again, I should be a very unhappy man," he cried.*

* There is a letter from Mr. John Blackwood, published in the Annals of that house (vol. iii. p. 98), which strikes so discriminating, so true a note of friendship and old companionship, that I cannot but quote the passage. The letter is to Mr. Langford, and is dated December 30, 1863:—

"Thackeray's death would be a sad blight upon your Christmas. It is a real grief to me, and indeed to all my family. 'Old Thack' was a constantly

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The last words Sir John Millais wrote to me were of my father: "I dwell now entirely on the past, as far back as when as a boy I walked the Jersey lanes in spring. . . . I follow on to the days of Trollope and your father, whom I loved." Newman, writing three days after my father's death, put his stone upon the cairn and wrote, "His last fugitive pieces in the *Cornhill* were almost sermons."

An American, Mr. Stoddart, the author of some touching lines on my father's death, writing of his work, has quoted a passage from George Brimley's Essays, which expresses something which is true of all good work: "Thackeray could not have produced 'Vanity Fair' unless Eden had been shining brightly before his eyes."

"Love is a higher intellectual exercise than hatred," my father himself has said.

In a letter to a friend Mr. Venables wrote: "I once told him that the basis of his character was religious sentimentality, and he gravely said that I understood him perfectly; but, like Horace, he gave warning that neither he nor his tastes, opinions, and feelings were to be attacked with impunity. His humorous pugnacity subsided at once in the presence of real or apparent goodness."

Another friend, Sir Theodore Martin, who was amongst the first to express a serious recognition of his place in literature—so my father himself felt and wrote—concluded a review of his works in 1853 with these words: "He fills a large space now in the world's

recurring thought and subject of conversation with us. . . . To London literary men Thackeray's death is a very serious loss. He was a central figure, and his tone leavened and did good to the whole body. By all good fellows it will be thoroughly felt."—And again to a contributor Mr. Blackwood writes, "I do not feel that the paper describes Thackeray, and consequently I did not like to put it into the magazine as our portrait and tribute to his memory. None of the numerous sketches I have had give to me any real picture of the man, with his fun and mixture of bitterness with warm good feeling. . . . Writing about 'Old Thack' has set me thinking about him and all the scenes we have had together. I feel so truly about him, that I am frightened to give a wrong impression of him to one who did not know him." Such words from those whom he trusted and who trusted him are *not* words, they are facts, and they represent what has been and is still for those of us who inherit these memories.

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, horses knocked up on the road, the owners

lated Jan 5. 19 Ric. II. Archaeologia XX. 96.

. leprosy fell on the King. Gascogne refused to

1. 211. quoting Sloane 1776.

o. his death.

-H. note 43.

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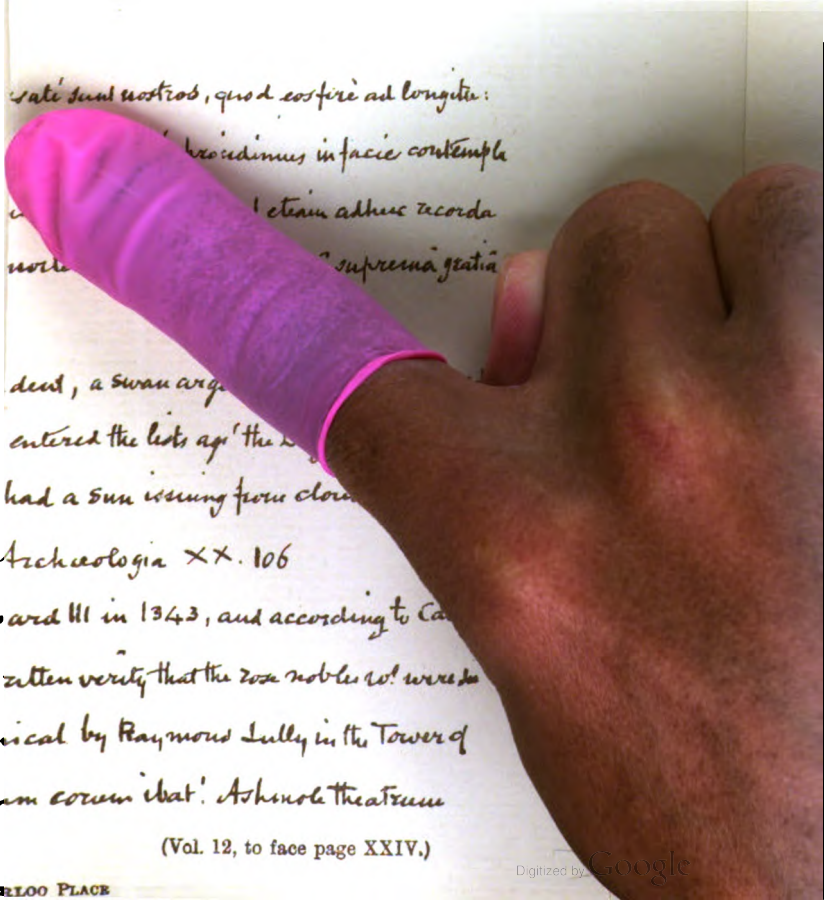
Bt. P. used nearly the same words at Creyd



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Archaeologia XX. 106

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(Vol. 12, to face page XXIV.)

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RLOO PLACE

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eye, and his reputation has become a matter of pride to his country, . . . that of the only satirist who mingles loving-kindness with his sarcasm, and charity and humility with his gravest rebuke." It makes one proud to read these words, so manly and so sincere.

Lord Houghton's beautiful lines in the *Cornhill* will be remembered:—

> "O gentler Censor of our age,
> Prime master of our ampler tongue,
> Whose word of wit and generous page
> Were never wroth except with wrong.
> Fielding without the manner's dross,
> Scott with a spirit's larger room,
> What prelate deems thy grave his loss—
> What Halifax erects thy tomb?
> But maybe he who so could draw
> The hidden great, the humble wise,
> Yielding with them to God's good law,
> Makes the Pantheon where he lies."

II

DENIS DUVAL

In my father's farewell circular to the readers and contributors of the *Cornhill Magazine* there is mention of a contemplated story which eventually became "Denis Duval," although I think that when the address was written, not "Denis Duval," but another history was in his mind.

The address was published in April 1862, and part of it has already been quoted. The editor, after announcing his resignation, concludes in the following words:—

"I had rather have a quiet life than gold lace and epaulets, and deeper than ever did plummet sound, I fling my speaking-trumpet. Once in a voyage to America, I met a sea-captain who was passenger in a ship he had formerly commanded. No man could be more

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happy and cheerful than this. He rode through the gale with the most perfect confidence in the ship and its captain; he surveyed the storm as being another gentleman's business; and his great delight was to be called at his watch, to invoke a blessing on the steward boy who woke him, and to turn round in his crib and go to sleep again. Let my successor command the *Cornhill*, giving me always a passage on board; and if the printer's boy rings at my door of an early morning, with a message that there are three pages wanting or four too much, I will send out my benediction to that printer's boy, and take t'other half-hour's doze.

"Though editor no more," continues my father, "I hope long to remain a contributor to my friend's magazine. I believe my own special readers will agree that my books will not suffer when their author is released from the daily task of reading, accepting, refusing, losing, and finding the works of other people. To say 'no' has often cost me a morning's peace and a day's work. I tremble *recenti metu*. Oh, those hours of madness spent in searching for Louisa's lost lines to her dead piping bull-finch, for Nhoj Senoj's mislaid essay! I tell them for the last time that the late editor will not be responsible for rejected communications, and herewith send off the chair and the great *Cornhill Magazine* tin box, with its load of care.

"Whilst the present tale of 'Philip' is passing through the press, I am preparing another, on which I have worked at intervals for many years past, and which I hope to introduce in the ensuing year; and I have stipulated for the liberty of continuing the little essays which have amused the public and the writer, and which I purpose to contribute from time to time to the pages of the *Cornhill Magazine*. W. M. T."

Before finally starting on the novel of "Denis Duval" he was turning over two stories in his mind. Of one of these—it was never written after all—we had often heard him speak, and there are some notes which concern it in the same MSS. volume which contains those for "Denis Duval." The story which was never written belonged to the days of Henry V., and we had seen him reading for it from time to time in Froissart and Brantôme and Monstrelet. The one fact concerning it which is vividly impressed

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Charles See Junius!

Mérite Militaire Order of

In Europea… ine 43 · 277 · T. Rodney of Dover writes that in 1773
in Ameri… told him he was the author of these letters.

…n established by Louis XV. 10 March 1759 in favour
… Countries where the Protestant religion is established
Prince de Nassau, Ct. de Waldeck

(Vol. 12, to face page XXV.)

…LISHED BY SMITH, ELDER, & Co., 15 WATERLO…

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on my mind is that the hero was to come into action on a cow, as the knights did at Agincourt when horses ran short.

The second story was to be shorter than the mediæval romance, and to date from 1763, with highway robbers and sea-fights, and a sailor for a hero; this was "Denis Duval."

My father used to talk a great deal about it all to us. Agnes, the heroine, had one or two aliases. She was sometimes Henriette, sometimes Blanche, but then he said she should be Agnes after all; it was an ugly name, but it was convenient for the working of the story, and there were two St. Agneses. In the same way Denis himself was called Blaise for a little time, and the Duvals were called Merian.

He was anxious about this novel. I can remember his saying that "Philip" had not enough story, and that this new book *must* be a success, if he could make it so. He used to carry the chapters about with him, and often pull them out from his coat pocket to consult.

He said that it was a superstition of his to write at least one line in every day whether he was ill or well. Only once, to my recollection, did he try to dictate some pages of "Denis Duval," but he very soon sent his secretary away, saying that he must write for himself.

It is in May 1863 that he writes to Mrs. Ritchie, the widow of his cousin William Ritchie, "the gentleman of the long robe" of the "Roundabout Papers," the friend and benefactor of so many here in England as well as in India, whose death at Calcutta the year before had been so great a shock: "If I haven't written to you sooner, be pleased to know that for the last ten days I have been almost *non compos mentis*. When I am in labour with a book I don't quite know what happens. I sit for hours before my paper, not doing my book, but incapable of doing anything else, and thinking upon that subject always, waking with it, walking about with it, and going to bed with it. Oh, the struggles and bothers—oh, the throbs and pains about this trumpery!"

There were a good many technical difficulties in the subject he had taken up, and he sometimes said that he should like to take a journey in a man-of-war so as to learn all the nautical phrases. Mr. Greenwood's notes on "Denis Duval" will show how carefully my father got all the details up.

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One pleasant impression still in my mind belonging to those days, is that of my father's return one summer's evening, pleased and in good spirits from a little visit he had paid to Winchelsea and Rye. He came home delighted with the old places; he had seen the ancient gateways and sketched one of them, and he had seen the great churches and the old houses, all sailing inland from the sea. Winchelsea was everything he had hoped for, and even better than he expected. He was so often ailing in those latter days that when he was well and happy it seemed to be a general holiday in the house.

Another association which I have with "Denis Duval" is connected with almost the last page of the manuscript. One day he came down at luncheon-time in great spirits and excitement; he was quite carried away by what he had been reading and writing that morning concerning the splendid gallantry of Captain Pearson of the *Serapis*. Instead of eating his luncheon, he began describing the engagement with as much pride as if he had witnessed it, or as if he had had a son serving on board. His old friend and neighbour Admiral FitzRoy had looked up the papers and particulars and sent them to him from the Admiralty; my father followed them all with something beyond interest, until he seemed to be actually living through the events which laid hold of his imagination.

My sister-in-law, Mrs. Warre Cornish, who was scarcely more than a child in those days, has written down some of her reminiscences of that time.

"Out of my girlish remembrance of visits at Palace Green," she writes, "the impression made by the creation of 'Denis Duval' remains extraordinarily clear. It was in the summer of 1863, and I believe that Mr. Thackeray was just then very happy, finding himself once more, after a long interval, in the full vein of historical romance. But I knew nothing of this at the time, only that the atmosphere of 'Denis Duval' permeated everything. The beautiful red house shaded by tall elms, on Palace Green; the bits of antique plate, china, and furniture, collected by Mr. Thackeray, when it was easier than it is now, to make genuine last-century purchases, 'brand new and intensely old' as he would describe some Louis XVI. clock or *guéridon* just brought home—all these

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old-world things seemed to me a part of the spell. The story progressed day by day, and reached us through his talk with his daughters, and with my sister and myself, whose father he had loved. The great world of London came and went past the quiet green precincts, and he went to the great world or came from it. It was the July season, and Mr. Thackeray's constant presence among a small band of his own and his daughters' friends—Mr. and Mrs. Collins, Herman Merivale and his sister,* Mrs. Williams Freeman, Frederick Walker, and others—left an indescribably full impression. But every day one received a clearer idea of the laborious daily task; the initiation behind the scenes into the delightful story which was coming into being was full, not only of wonder and charm, but of the serious aspect of work in Mr. Thackeray's house.

I remember when the story of the poor Countess of Saverne absorbed him. "The Countess is growing very mad," he said one day; "last night St. Sebastian appeared to her stuck all over with arrows—*looking like a fricandeau*," he added gravely, though with a mock shudder. And then he would sketch for us what we read afterwards, that Count de Saverne was heartbroken about his wife's flight with the little Agnes; and one gathered the story of the duel with the mysterious Count de la Motte, who had been brought up as a priest. The Count de Saverne was to be killed, and round his neck was to be found within his shirt a little shoe hanging by a string.

"You know, Papa, Victor Hugo has got a shoe."

"So he has! Hugo has a *magnificent* shoe. It must be something else. What do babies wear?"

We could not think of anything but the cap, but we regretted it, and agreed that nothing was so pathetic as a shoe.

The inspiration sometimes had to be waited for and caught at the flood. The carriage came to the door and waited, waited an hour, an hour and a half, two hours. Mr. Thackeray wrote on.

* Mrs. Williams Freeman, who was Ella Merivale, and very young in those days, remembers sitting at luncheon by my father, who was helping us all, as he sat at the head of the table. To her he said—

"Little maid with sparkling eye,
Will you have some mutton pie?
Little maid with tender heart,
Will you have some apple tart?"

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His daughters only said what a good thing it was that every ten minutes made a page of Papa's handwriting. At last he came, and got into the carriage with us, all in the best of spirits. As we drove towards Wimbledon or Richmond he would read *every* name on the small shops as we passed; he wanted Christian names for certain smugglers to come into the story. He commented on all the names. Every minute seemed brimful in his society; one never thinks, even when remembering what followed, of incompletion.

At a garden party I have a recollection of a man saying to him, "It is said, Thackeray, of you, that you have body enough for two and soul enough for three. . . ."

"Soul enough for one I hope—I can but *hope*," he replied gravely.

One other recollection of those working days of his is very vivid. Besides writing "Denis Duval" and the "Roundabout Papers," he was receiving calls for articles which he was often indisposed to write—once it was a critique of the sketches collected and exhibited after Cruikshank's death. He accepted the task, declaring he would fail.

"If I were you, Papa, I would write all round the subject and say as little as possible about it."

This was the quiet voice of his youngest daughter.

"Thank you, my dear," he said, and I can see him pacing the room impatiently and her sitting calmly by—the most reposeful, the most observant of women, then a girl of twenty, with shining bronze hair and bright rosy cheeks; she was ever reserved, but with him in perfect sympathy of taste and feeling.

. . . . . .

My father's last letter to Dr. John Brown, with whom my sister was staying in Edinburgh that autumn, touches on "Denis Duval":—

"PALACE GREEN, *September* 23, 1863.

"MY DEAR J. B.,—I am very glad you like my little Min; with her and her sister I have led such a happy life that I am afraid almost as I think of it lest any accident should disturb it. . . . We three get on so comfortably together that the house is not the house when one is away.

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DENIS AND DR. BARNARD

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"I have done no work for a whole year, and must now set to at this stale old desk, or there will be no beef and mutton—I have spent too much money on this fine house one way or t'other, besides gimcracks, china, plate, the deuce knows what. I am not in debt, thank my stars, but instead of writing to you, why am I not writing the history of Denis Duval, Esq., Admiral of the White Squadron? Because I don't know anything about the sea and seamen, and get brought up by my ignorance every other page.

"Good-bye, my dear J. B. My love to the children.—Your grateful old friend, W. M. T."

There is a chapter of "Denis Duval" hitherto not printed, in which my father says, "Over the back of the armchair in which I sit, I remember, as a boy, how there used to hang a little slim, powdered queue which dear old Doctor C. wore." (Doctor C. was Doctor Carmichael-Smyth.) "His son inherited the chair; he also has passed away. As I lean in the comfortable arms (not unmindful that the generation to which I belong is the next to be called) I hold on to the past which was present once to my faithful old study companion. Burke has sat in the chair, and I remember having heard the owner talk of Garrick, whom he knew. His own sons took honourable parts in the great European and Asian wars at the commencement of the century. Here, then, their father has sat, with moist eyes and heart, thankful to the Father of all, reading the young men's affectionate letters."

We have the pen-and-ink sketch of the old chair described in the suppressed chapter. It is drawn on the back of one of the pages of the manuscript of "Denis Duval"; which manuscript a friend brought us, who had discovered it long after my father's death, carefully put away and forgotten.

The only picture of "Denis Duval" by my father is the little water-colour sketch here given. Poor Denis is flying from his old grandfather the perruquier's blows to the protection of Dr. Barnard. There is another water-colour sketch done at the same time by Frederick Walker, in the possession of Mr. George Smith, representing "little Denis dancing and singing before the navy gentlemen"; the design for this was my father's, and it is referred to in the life of Frederick Walker as "the last drawing from Mr. Thackeray's

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hand." Mr. Walker reproduced it for the *Cornhill Magazine*. And Mr. Marks tells us that of the four illustrations for "Denis Duval," Walker afterwards reproduced two in water-colour—"Evidence for the Defence," and "Denis's Valet." They both belong to Mr. and Mrs. George Smith. Walker's water-colour sketches are all charming, specially that one of the two boys looking at the pistol with the box standing open before them. In the picture of Denis, the figure of the boy is delightful, with the *bel air*, as Madame de Sévigné calls it, of youth and nature; but the drawing of the mother does not in the least represent the grim and violent personage described in the text.

Among other critics, Leslie Stephen, writing of "Denis Duval," has spoken "of the harmonious unfinished picture that might have been worthy to be put beside Esmond," and, indeed, as one reads the notes one realises what a complete historical impression the book should have come to be.* The lines laid by so sure a hand, seem to spread out into a wider and more comprehensive horizon; it is a story of action rather than of thought, with the strange heroic figures of the last century for heroes, warm-hearted, heavy-handed. Perhaps the writer was not uninfluenced by his early associations with a family of soldiers and their ways and talk. He always had the keenest interest in naval and military things.

Since his death there has been an immense revival of appreciation of those warlike times; of the days of Nelson, when the great fleets were sweeping the high seas. Denis came at the head of those stirring, honest, and delightful heroes of Stevenson and others —seamen belonging to a splendid day, who did not split hairs, who still clung to their pig-tails, who fought and bled, somewhat haphazard perhaps, but who from early training or from natural bent made more often for right than for wrong.

Some chapters of the wonderful histories of Nelson and his shipmates, lately published, read at times like a page out of "Denis Duval."

Take Colonel Drinkwater's story as it is quoted in Mahan's

* Charles Dickens wrote, "In respect of earnest feeling, far-seeing purpose, character, incident, and a certain loving picturesqueness blending the whole, I believe it to be much the best of all his works."

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book—Colonel Drinkwater, who met Nelson shortly before the battle of Camperdown, which was fought on the 11th of October 1797, when Nelson was not yet quite recovered from his terrible wound.

"One of the first questions Mr. Nelson put to me was whether I had been at the Admiralty I told him there was a rumour that the British fleet had been engaged with that of Holland. He started up in his peculiar energetic manner, notwithstanding Lady Nelson's attempt to quiet him, and stretching out his unwounded

THREE SEAMEN.

arm, 'Drinkwater,' said he, 'I would give this other arm to be with Duncan at this moment.' So unconquerable was the spirit of the man, and so intense his eagerness to give every instant of his life to the service."

Something of the spirit of this absorption in life's work, rather than in life's continuance, seems in some measure to animate all master spirits and great men, whether warriors, or teachers, or administrators, or artists. Each one seems to be the servant of some higher unknown rule; to be in part the expression of that

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which is beyond all speech. My father was not alone among his companions to live and teach and work in obedience to a law which is stronger for great men than for smaller ones.

Lesser men in turn are not slow to do justice to those they trust, and whose mission they recognise.

Only a few days before his death my father came home one afternoon saying that he could not get accustomed to the number of people whom he did not know, who seemed to know him in the street, and took off their hats as he went along. His figure was so remarkable, and so little to be passed over, that no wonder people recognised him as they recognised Tennyson or Carlyle, or any other of the well-known characters of those days.

Except for the spontaneous expression of regard from his readers, my father never received any of those other recognitions or marks of favour which are more common now than they were then. The Benchers of the Middle Temple sent him a message a few days before he died, which pleased him, that they were about to elect him a Bencher, but his name was never actually on the list.

One bright afternoon in December 1863 we drove with him to the Temple. Our friend Lady Colvile came with us, and we went through the Park to pick him up at the Athenæum, and then on to the Temple church, where the service was going on. The anthem was "Rejoice, and again I say unto you, rejoice," and afterwards the evening hymn was sung. When we came out from the inner aisle, he was waiting for us, standing quite still with his back turned. He began to chant the anthem in an undertone, and then he praised the evening hymn, which he always liked; he said it was simple and unaffected, and entirely to the purpose, expressing just what was needful and no more. We walked with him along the Terrace and down some steps into the Garden. For a little while longer the sky was very bright and red, then the twilight began, and we went in to tea with Herman Merivale, who was expecting us in his rooms, up some twisting stairs. My father laughed and was in good spirits, and looked at the pictures upon the walls. Perhaps it all reminded him of his own Temple days—"Ah, happy rooms, bright rooms, rooms near the sky," he says in "Philip," "to remember you is to be young again."

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My father's last visit to Charterhouse, on Founder's Day, and the enthusiastic welcome the boys gave him as he walked up the old hall, has often been alluded to. "C.H., December 12th," is almost the last entry in his diary. A letter from the Rev. Alfred Gatty, another old Carthusian, reminds me that my father, as he himself did, acted as steward on this occasion.*

A day or two before his death I went out driving in the twilight with my father. We met Mr. Carlyle walking along the path by the Serpentine, and my father began to wave to him—"a great shower of salutations," Carlyle said in after days, speaking of that last meeting, with the strange echo of tenderness in his grave tones that those who loved him can remember.

It was on the 17th of December 1863 that this last letter about his work was written :—

"PALACE GREEN.

"DEAR SMITH,—I was just going to be taken prisoner by Paul Jones when I had to come to bed. If I could get a month's ease I could finish the eight numbers handsomely with the marriage of Denis and Agnes, after the capture of Toulon by the English. 'The Course of True Love' I thought of as a pretty name. . . .

"Yesterday BURGLARS entered our house and robbed my poor mother and girls of watches, trinkets, diamonds—all my little presents, lockets, bracelets, to poor Annie since she was fifteen."

He had no real illness, but he flagged all that last week and was more at home than usual. An old friend who came to see us told me that my father took him upstairs to his room to show him

* The year before, the author of "The Newcomes" had also dined at Charterhouse, and Professor Jebb, who was present, writes in reply to a letter of mine, many years afterwards :—

"After the Charterhouse dinner I went with another young Cambridge man to Evans's, in Covent Garden. Presently your father came in. He recognised us as having been at the dinner, and sat down at the table where we were. I remember feeling very shy at first, and also that the feeling wore off as he talked. I noticed that he spoke warmly of Longfellow, apropos of a reference made by one of us to those lines from 'Hyperion,' 'Many a year is in its grave.' Before we separated he asked us to dine with him the next day at Palace Green."

I can also recall my father's interest in the young man, the Senior Classic that year at Cambridge, who had once been Captain of Charterhouse School.

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some book, and he noticed that he was quite tired and out of breath with the one flight of stairs.

He had so often been ill and rallied, that my sister and I clung to this hope; but our grandmother was more anxious than we were.

He was ill one morning and he sent for me to give me some directions, and to tell me to write some notes. He had the *Times* upon his bed. This was two days before Christmas. He died suddenly in the early morning of Christmas Eve, December 24, 1863.

He was not sorry to go; only a day or two before he had said so.

Even when he was comparatively well and strong, he had written to his mother: "Providence, which poor M. impugns, is very tolerably kind to me. M. didn't seem to be aware that she had used such rebellious expressions when I took her to task. I asked her why the natural laws were to be interrupted in my particular case? Did Heaven send the little boys out of the shop to knock you down and give you a hundred days of pain, and years of lameness? Was it specially concerned in punishing, chastising, trying, blessing, smashing, saving, those Jews who were under the Tower of Siloam when it fell? A brick may have knocked a just man's brains out, and a beam fallen so as to protect a scoundrel who happened to be standing under. The bricks and beams fell according to the laws which regulate bricks in tumbling. So with our diseases—we die because we are born; we decay because we grow. I have a right to say, 'O Father, give me submission to bear cheerfully (if possible) and patiently my sufferings;' but I can't request any special change in my behalf from the ordinary processes, or see any special Divine *animus* superintending my illnesses or wellnesses. Those people seem to me presumptuous who are for ever dragging the Awful Divinity into a participation with their private concerns. In health, disease, birth, life, death, here, hereafter, I am the subject and creature. He lifts me up and sets me down certainly—so He orders my beard to grow. Yonder on my table in the next room is a number of the 'Earthen Vessel'—Brother Jones writes of Brother Brown how preciously he has been dealt with: Brown has been blessed by an illness; he has had the blessing of getting better; he has relapsed, and finally has the blessing of being called out of the world altogether. I don't differ with Brown essentially

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—only in the compliments, as it were, which he thinks it is proper to be for ever paying. I am well: Amen. I am ill: Amen. I die: Amen always. I can't say that having a tooth out is a blessing—is a punishment for my sins. I say it's having a tooth out."

Elsewhere he says: "I must tell you the truth, as I believe it in opposition to what I consider to be erroneous; and when I was going to die, as I thought I was one night, I was as easy in mind, and as trustful of God and as confident in His wisdom and mercy, as St. Augustin, or St. Teresa, or Lady Huntingdon, or the Rev. Cæsar Malan—I mean any Churchman high or low, and so no more about it."

And again: "As you and I send for our children, meaning them only love and kindness, how much more *Pater Noster*"—thus he wrote to a friend in America.

W. M. Thackeray *to* Mrs. Procter.

"Edinburgh, *November* 26, 1856.

". . . I only saw through an old number of the *Illustrated London News* what had happened in your house, and this very afternoon as I came through the snow from Glasgow was thinking shall I write now or later?—later I had determined it should be, but your little note seems to say otherwise, and under the two or three lines about Mrs. Reach I read: Why as a friend do you show no mark of sympathy at a time when friendship ought to give it?—I don't know. I am not sorry for most people, certainly not for those old and in pain, for whom sleep must be a consoler after the fitful fever. I thought when I read the news, how very lately I had tried to give courage to my own mother, who lacked it, with an account of Mrs. Montagu's wonderful endurance and self-abnegation. It was so *kind* of her to be courageous at that time, and spare grief to you all. I remember whom you told me, of all others she had lost, she wanted to see. Have these two met in yonder vast next world? When we talked about it last, I said I thought it seemed lonely there. Thinking of it is thinking of God inscrutable, immeasurable, endless, beginningless, supreme, awfully solitary. Little children step off this earth into the infinite and we tear our hearts out over their sweet cold hands and smiling faces, that drop indifferent when you cease holding them,

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and smile as the lid is closing over them. I don't think we deplore the old who have had enough of living and striving and have buried so many others, and must be weary of living—it seems time for them to go—for where's the pleasure of staying when the feast is over, and the flowers withered, and the guests gone? Isn't it better to blow the light out than sit on among the broken meats and collapsed jellies and vapid heeltaps? I go—to what I don't know—but to God's next world, which is His and He made it. One paces up and down the shore yet awhile—and looks towards the unknown ocean, and thinks of the traveller whose boat sailed yesterday. Those we love can but walk down to the pier with us—the voyage we must make alone. Except for the young or very happy, I can't say I am sorry for any one who dies."

Whenever my father wrote of death it was with peaceful encouragement and good-will, and now with his own words it seems fitting to end these notes of his dear life.

A. I. R.

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UNPUBLISHED CHAPTER OF "DENIS DUVAL"

OVER the back of the arm-chair in which I sit, I remember as a boy how there used to hang a little, slim, powdered queue which dear old Dr. C. wore. His son inherited the chair; he also has passed away. As I lean back in the comfortable arms (not unmindful that the generation to which I belong is the next to be called) I hold on to the past which was present once to my study companion. Burke has sat in the chair, and I remember having heard the owner talk of Garrick, whom he knew—his own sons took honourable part in the great European and Asian wars at the commencement of the century; here their father has sat with moist eyes, and heart thankful to the Father of all, reading the affectionate letters from the brave young men who told of Bhurtpore and Delhi, of Bergen-op-Zoom and Waterloo. Good readers, if you will listen to a story of old times, I will relate one which must have come to pass when this old chair was new.

When the old chair was some five-and-forty years younger than it is to-day, some of the people were yet alive whose adventures and characters we shall try to depict. The two chief personages whom our story exhibits lived in comfort and opulence in a little old town of Fairport, in Hampshire, where, during and after the great European war, the society was mainly composed of wives, widows, and daughters of his Majesty's navy. Portraits of gentlemen in red coats and white facings hung in most of the parlours. Pictures of shipwrecks and naval combats were to be seen in almost all drawing-rooms. I think the two prints representing the famous action between the *Java* and the *Constitution* were the most modern works of art to be seen at Fairport, and, you know, that battle was fought the year before Waterloo. A sedan-chair or two still existed in the place, and took out the good ladies to tea on rainy evenings. Dinner

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was at three or four o'clock; home-made wines, by some young palates thought delicious, were not uncommonly served at dessert; at six appeared tea, and then came cards, quadrille, and whist until eleven, when a neat little supper terminated the evening's mild amusement. Betty and Mary arrived with the shawls, clogs, and lantern; and the good ladies went to rest, to rise the next morning for just such another day's gossip, business, and pleasure. There were scarcely any men in the Fairport society. There were many widows and elderly spinsters, daughters of deceased Commodores and Captains. It was not certainly an intellectual society, very few books were read: indeed, books were not considered fit furniture for ladies' bedrooms. I don't know how many families would club together to take in the Portsmouth paper. There was plenty of beautiful old china which the dear old ladies delicately washed and polished after tea. I can see one of them now with one of the kindest and sweetest faces in the world, which beams and nods from the parlour window as the London coach pulls up at the garden gate, with a little boy from school on the first delightful day of the Midsummer holiday.

Our cottage was called Rose Cottage; I wonder do the roses still clamber round the porch. It was quite a modest little cottage, but next door was Laurel House, the residence of Madame Admiral Duval. A comfortable brick-built mansion, with bow-windows on each side of the door, and cedars and evergreens on the lawn. Thousands and thousands of times have their shadows been cast upon the grass since their mistress and master beheld their dark verdure.

I place the mistress first, just as Madame Duval was the first in rank of the good couple. If she were to appear and walk down Fairport High Street now, how the children would wonder! Madame Duval used always to wear a dress of grey figured-silk, with sleeves ruffled at the elbow, and mittens of black lace; she walked on the prettiest little velvet high-heeled shoes, bearing a tortoise-shell cane before her, which she held daintily between thumb and finger. She carried a snuff-box and a tooth-pick, and used both with a perfect grace. What would you say nowadays to a duchess with a tooth-pick case and a snuff-box. Madame Duval's had been given by Count de Gras to her husband, Lieutenant Duval,

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CAPTAIN BECHER, R.N.

MRS. BECHER

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who acted as the Count's interpreter on board the ——, of which M. Duval was lieutenant. After Rodney's famous victory forty years ago, at the time of which I speak, Madame's hair was as white as snow; but in her picture, as I have seen it, in a dress of white muslin sprigged with gold, the locks were as black as jay's wings. It used to hang in her dining-room between the portraits of her son, who died early, and of her husband in his uniform of blue and white, with a ruffled hand in his waistcoat, and a smile on his broad kind face.* Madame Duval appeared very seldom, and at Fairport evening parties, you see, there were differences—many quarrels and feuds among the dear old people at Fairport. Questions of social precedence were debated with much acrimony, and sometimes with actual violence. I remember a dreadful to-do, for instance, one day, when my grand-aunt Tomlinson, a doctor of divinity's lady, said she would never consent to leave a room after Mrs. Sawyer, who was the wife of a medical man. The two, I fear, had a scuffle in the hall on their way to the tea-room. Ah, dear grand-aunt Tomlinson, the question between you and Mrs. S. is buried under the grass now, and the impartial daisies cover you both!

* My father once made a rough sketch of these two paintings, which he sent to Mr. FitzGerald, and which we give on the preceding page.

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THE

WOLVES AND THE LAMB

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Mr. HORACE MILLIKEN, *a Widower, a wealthy City Merchant.*
GEORGE MILLIKEN, *a Child, his Son.*
Captain TOUCHIT, *his Friend.*
CLARENCE KICKLEBURY, *Brother to Milliken's late Wife.*
JOHN HOWELL, *M.'s Butler and confidential Servant.*
CHARLES PAGE, *Foot-boy.*
BULKELEY, *Lady Kicklebury's Servant.*
Mr. BONNINGTON.
Coachman, Cabman; a Bluecoat Boy, another Boy (Mrs. Prior's Sons).

Lady KICKLEBURY, *Mother-in-law to Milliken.*
Mrs. BONNINGTON, *Milliken's Mother (married again).*
Mrs. PRIOR.
Miss PRIOR, *her Daughter, Governess to Milliken's Children.*
ARABELLA MILLIKEN, *a Child.*
MARY BARLOW, *Schoolroom Maid.*
A grown-up Girl and Child of Mrs. Prior's, Lady K.'s Maid, Cook.

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THE

WOLVES AND THE LAMB

ACT I

SCENE.—MILLIKEN'S *Villa at Richmond; two drawing-rooms opening into one another. The late* MRS. MILLIKEN'S *portrait over the mantelpiece; book-cases, writing-tables, piano, newspapers, a handsomely furnished saloon. The back room opens, with very large windows, on the lawn and pleasure-ground; gate, and wall—over which the heads of a cab and a carriage are seen, as persons arrive. Fruit, and a ladder on the walls. A door to the dining-room, another to the sleeping apartments, &c.*

JOHN. Everybody out; governor in the City; governess (heigh-ho!) walking in the Park with the children; Ladyship gone out in the carriage. Let's sit down and have a look at the papers. Buttons! fetch the *Morning Post* out of Lady Kicklebury's room. Where's the *Daily News*, sir?

PAGE. Think it's in Milliken's room.

JOHN. Milliken! you scoundrel! What do you mean by Milliken? Speak of your employer as your governor if you like; but not as simple Milliken. Confound your impudence! you'll be calling me Howell next.

PAGE. Well! I didn't know. *You* call him Milliken.

JOHN. Because I know him, because I'm intimate with him, because there's not a secret he has but I may have it for the asking; because the letters addressed to Horace Milliken, Esquire, might as well be addressed John Howell, Esquire, for I read 'em, I put 'em away and docket 'em, and remember 'em. I know his affairs better than he does: his income to a shilling, pay his tradesmen, wear his coats, if I like. *I* may call Mr. Milliken what I please; but not

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you, you little scamp of a clod-hopping ploughboy. Know your station and do your business, or you don't wear *them* buttons long, I promise you. [*Exit Page.*

Let me go on with the paper. (*Reads.*) How brilliant this writing is! *Times*, *Chronicle*, *Daily News*, they're all good, blest if they ain't. How much better the nine leaders in them three daily papers is, than nine speeches in the House of Commons! Take a very best speech in the 'Ouse now, and compare it with an article in the *Times!* I say, the newspaper has the best of it for philosophy, for wit, novelty, good sense too. And the party that writes the leading article is nobody, and the chap that speaks in the House of Commons is a hero. Lord, Lord, how the world is 'umbugged! Pop'lar representation! What *is* pop'lar representation? Dammy, it's a farce. Hallo! this article is stole! I remember a passage in Montesquieu uncommonly like it.

[*Goes and gets the book. As he is standing upon sofa to get it, and sitting down to read it, Miss Prior and the children have come in at the garden. Children pass across stage.*

Miss Prior *enters by open window, bringing flowers into the room.*

John. It *is* like it. (*He slaps the book, and seeing Miss Prior who enters, then jumps up from sofa, saying very respectfully,*) I beg your pardon, miss.

Miss Prior (*sarcastically*). Do I disturb you, Howell?

John. Disturb! I have no right to say—a servant has no right to be disturbed, but I hope I may be pardoned for venturing to look at a volume in the libery, miss, just in reference to a newspaper harticle—that's all, miss.

Miss P. You are very fortunate in finding anything to interest you in the paper, I'm sure.

John. Perhaps, miss, you are not accustomed to political discussion, and ignorant of—ah—I beg your pardon: a servant, I know, has no right to speak.

[*Exit into dining-room, making a low bow.*

Miss Prior. The coolness of some people is really quite extraordinary! the airs they give themselves, the way in which they answer one, the books they read! Montesquieu: "Esprit des Lois!" (*Takes book up which J. has left on sofa.*) I believe the man has actually taken this from the shelf. I am sure Mr. Milliken, or her Ladyship, never would. The other day "Helvetius" was found in Mr. Howell's pantry, forsooth! It is wonder-

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ful how he picked up French whilst we were abroad! "Esprit des Lois!" what is it? it must be dreadfully stupid. And as for reading "Helvetius" (who, I suppose, was a Roman general), I really can't understand how——Dear, dear! what airs these persons give themselves! What will come next? A footman—I beg Mr. Howell's pardon—a butler and confidential valet lolls on the drawing-room sofa, and reads Montesquieu! Impudence! And add to this, he follows me for the last two or three months with eyes that are quite horrid. What can the creature mean? But I forgot—I am only a governess. A governess is not a lady—a governess is but a servant—a governess is to work and walk all day with the children, dine in the schoolroom, and come to the drawing-room to play the man of the house to sleep. A governess is a domestic, only her place is not the servants' hall, and she is paid not quite so well as the butler who serves her her glass of wine. Odious! George! Arabella! there are those little wretches quarrelling again! [*Exit.*

Children are heard calling out, and seen quarrelling in garden.

JOHN (*re-entering*). See where she moves! grace is in all her steps. 'Eaven in her high—no—a-heaven in her heye, in every gesture dignity and love—ah, I wish I could sây it! I wish you may procure it, poor fool! She passes by me—she tr-r-amples on me. Here's the chair she sets in. (*Kisses it.*) Here's the piano she plays on. Pretty keys, them fingers out-hivories you! When she plays on it, I stand and listen at the drawing-room door, and my heart thr-obs in time! Fool, fool, fool! why did you look on her, John Howell? why did you beat for her, busy heart? You were tranquil till you knew her! I thought I could have been a-happy with Mary till then. That girl's affection soothed me. Her conversation didn't amuse me much, her ideers ain't exactly elevated, but they are just and proper. Her attentions pleased me. She ever kep' the best cup of tea for me. She crisped my buttered toast, or mixed my quiet tumbler for me, as I sat of hevenings and read my newspaper in the kitching. She respected the sanctaty of my pantry. When I was a-studying there, she never interrupted me. She darned my stockings for me, she starched and folded my chokers, and she sowed on the habsent buttons of which time and chance had bereft my linning. She has a good heart, Mary has. I know she'd get up and black the boots for me of the coldest winter mornings. She did when we was in humbler life, she did.

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Enter MARY.

You have a good heart, Mary!

MARY. Have I, dear John? (*Sadly.*)

JOHN. Yes, child—yes. I think a better never beat in woman's bosom. You're good to everybody—good to your parents whom you send half your wages to: good to your employers whom you never robbed of a halfpenny.

MARY (*whimpering*). Yes, I did, John. I took the jelly when you were in bed with the influenza; and brought you the pork-wine negus.

JOHN. Port, not pork, child. Pork is the hanimal which Jews ab'or. Port is from Oporto in Portugal.

MARY (*still crying*). Yes, John; you know everything a'most, John.

JOHN. And you, poor child, but little! It's not heart you want, you little trump, it's education, Mary: it's information: it's head, head, head! You can't learn. You never can learn. Your ideers ain't no good. You never can hinterchange 'em with mine. Conversation between us is impossible. It's not your fault. Some people are born clever; some are born tall—I ain't tall.

MARY. Ho! you're big enough for me, John.

[*Offers to take his hand.*

JOHN. Let go my 'and—my a-hand, Mary! I say, some people are born with brains, and some with big figures. Look at that great ass, Bulkeley, Lady K.'s man—the besotted, stupid beast! He's as big as a life-guardsman, but he ain't no more education nor ideers than the ox he feeds on.

MARY. Law, John, whatever do you mean?

JOHN. H'm! you know not, little one! you never can know. Have *you* ever felt the pangs of imprisoned genius? have you ever felt what 'tis to be a slave?

MARY. Not in a free country, I should hope, John Howell—no such a thing. A place is a place, and I know mine, and am content with the spear of life in which it pleases Heaven to place me, John: and I wish you were, and remembered what we learned from our parson when we went to school together in dear old Pigeoncot, John—when you used to help little Mary with her lessons, John, and fought Bob Brown, the big butcher's boy, because he was rude to me, John, and he gave you that black hi.

JOHN. Say eye, Mary, not heye (*gently*).

MARY. Eye; and I thought you never looked better in all your life than you did then: and we both took service at Squire Milliken's—me as dairy-girl, and you as knife-boy: and good masters

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have they been to us from our youth hup: both old Squire Milliken and Mr. Horace as is master now, and poor Mrs. as is dead, though she had her tantrums—and I thought we should save up and take the "Milliken Arms"—and now we have saved up—and now, now, now—oh, you are a stone, a stone, a stone! and I wish you were hung round my neck, and I were put down the well! There's the hupstairs bell.

[*She starts, changing her manner as she hears the bell, and exit.*

JOHN (*looking after her*). It's all true. Gospel-true. We were children in the same village—sat on the same form at school. And it was for her sake that Bob Brown the butcher's boy whopped me. A black eye! I'm not handsome. But if I were ugly, ugly as the Saracen's 'Ead, ugly as that beast Bulkeley, I know it would be all the same to Mary. *She* has never forgot the boy she loved, that brought birds'-nests for her, and spent his halfpenny on cherries, and bought a fairing with his first half-crown—a brooch it was, I remember, of two billing doves a-hopping on one twig, and brought it home for little yellow-haired, blue-eyed, red-cheeked Mary. Lord, Lord! I don't like to think how I've kissed 'em, the pretty cheeks! they've got quite pale now with crying—and she has never once reproached me, not once, the trump, the little tr-rump!

Is it my fault (*stamping*) that Fate has separated us? Why did my young master take me up to Oxford, and give me the run of his libery and the society of the best scouts in the University? Why did he take me abroad? Why have I been to Italy, France, Jummany with him—their manners noted and their realms surveyed, by Jingo! I've improved myself, and Mary has remained as you was. I try a conversation, and she can't respond. She's never got a word of poetry beyond Watts' Ims, and if I talk of Byron or Moore to her, I'm blest if she knows anything more about 'em than the cook, who is as hignorant as a pig, or that beast Bulkeley, Lady Kick's footman. Above all, why, why did I see the woman upon whom my wretched heart is fixed for ever, and who carries away my soul with her—prostrate, I say, prostrate, through the mud at the skirts of her gownd! Enslaver! why did I ever come near you? O enchantress Kelipso! how you have got hold of me! It was Fate, Fate, Fate. When Mrs. Milliken fell ill of scarlet fever at Naples, Milliken was away at Petersborough, Rooshia, looking after his property. Her foring woman fled. Me and the governess remained and nursed her and the children. We nursed the little ones out of the fever. We buried their mother. We brought the children home over Halp and Happenine. I nursed 'em all three, I tended 'em all three, the orphans, and the

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lovely gu-gu-governess. At Rome where she took ill, I waited on her; as we went to Florence, had we been attacked by twenty thousand brigands, this little arm had courage for them all! And if I loved thee, Julia, was I wrong? and if I basked in thy beauty day and night, Julia, am I not a man? and if, before this Peri, this enchantress, this gazelle, I forgot poor little Mary Barlow, how could I help it? I say, how the doose could I help it?

Enter Lady KICKLEBURY, BULKELEY *following with parcels and a spaniel.*

LADY K. Are the children and the governess come home?

JOHN. Yes, my Lady (*in a perfectly altered tone*).

LADY K. Bulkeley, take those parcels to my sitting-room.

JOHN. Get up, old stoopid. Push along, old daddylonglegs (*aside to Bulkeley*).

LADY K. Does any one dine here to-day, Howell?

JOHN. Captain Touchit, my Lady.

LADY K. He's always dining here.

JOHN. My master's oldest friend.

LADY K. Don't tell me. He comes from his Club. He smells of smoke; he is a low vulgar person. Send Pinhorn up to me when you go downstairs. [*Exit Lady K.*

JOHN. I know. Send Pinhorn to me, means, Send my bonny brown hair, and send my beautiful complexion, and send my figure —and, O Lord! O Lord! what an old tigress that is! What an old Hector! How she do twist Milliken round her thumb! He's born to be bullied by women: and I remember him henpecked—let's see, ever since—ever since the time of that little gloveress at Woodstock, whose picter poor Mrs. M. made such a noise about when she found it in the lumber-room. Heh! *her* picture will be going into the lumber-room some day. M. must marry to get rid of his mother-in-law and mother over him: no man can stand it, not M. himself, who's a Job of a man. Isn't he? look at him!

[*As he has been speaking, the bell has rung, the Page has run to the garden-door, and* MILLIKEN *enters through the garden, laden with a hamper, bandbox, and cricket-bat.*

MILLIKEN. Why was the carriage not sent for me, Howell? There was no cab at the station, and I have had to toil all the way up the hill with these confounded parcels of my Lady's.

JOHN. I suppose the shower took off all the cabs, sir. When *did* a man ever git a cab in a shower?—or a policeman at a pinch—or a friend when you wanted him—or anything at the right time, sir?

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MILLIKEN. But, sir, why didn't the carriage come, I say?

JOHN. *You* know.

MILLIKEN. How do you mean I know? confound your impudence!

JOHN. Lady Kicklebury took it—your mother-in-law took it—went out a-visiting—Ham Common, Petersham—Twick'nam—doose knows where. She, and her footman, and her span'l dog.

MILLIKEN. Well, sir, suppose her Ladyship *did* take the carriage? Hasn't she a perfect right? And if the carriage was gone, I want to know, John, why the devil the pony-chaise wasn't sent with the groom? Am I to bring a bonnet-box and a hamper of fish in my own hands, I should like to know?

JOHN. Heh! (*Laughs.*)

MILLIKEN. Why do you grin, you Cheshire cat?

JOHN. Your mother-in-law had the carriage; and your mother sent for the pony-chaise. Your pa wanted to go and see the Wicar of Putney. Mr. Bonnington don't like walking when he can ride.

MILLIKEN. And why shouldn't Mr. Bonnington ride, sir, as long as there's a carriage in my stable? Mr. Bonnington has had the gout, sir! Mr. Bonnington is a clergyman, and married to my mother. He has *every* title to my respect.

JOHN. And to your pony-chaise—yes, sir.

MILLIKEN. And to everything he likes in this house, sir.

JOHN. What a good fellow you are, sir! You'd give your head off your shoulders, that you would. Is the fish for dinner to-day? Bandbox for my Lady, I suppose, sir? (*Looks in.*) Turban, feathers, bugles, marabouts, spangles—doose knows what. Yes, it's for her Ladyship. (*To Page.*) Charles, take this bandbox to her Ladyship's maid. (*To his master.*) What sauce would you like with the turbot? Lobster sauce or Hollandaise? Hollandaise is best—most wholesome for you. Anybody besides Captain Touchit coming to dinner?

MILLIKEN. No one that I know of.

JOHN. Very good. Bring up a bottle of the brown hock? He likes the brown hock, Touchit does. [*Exit John.*

Enter Children. *They run to* MILLIKEN.

BOTH. How d'you do, papa? How do you do, papa?

MILLIKEN. Kiss your old father, Arabella. Come here, George—— What?

GEORGE. Don't care for kissing—kissing's for gals. Have you brought me that bat from London?

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MILLIKEN. Yes. Here's the bat; and here's the ball (*takes one from pocket*)—and——

GEORGE. Where's the wickets, papa? O-o-o—where's the wickets? (*Howls.*)

MILLIKEN. My dear darling boy! I left them at the office. What a silly papa I was to forget them! Parkins forgot them.

GEORGE. Then turn him away, I say! Turn him away!

[*He stamps.*

MILLIKEN. What! an old faithful clerk and servant of your father and grandfather for thirty years past? An old man, who loves us all, and has nothing but our pay to live on?

ARABELLA. Oh, you naughty boy!

GEORGE. I ain't a naughty boy.

ARABELLA. You *are* a naughty boy.

GEORGE. He! he! he! he! [*Grins at her.*

MILLIKEN. Hush, children! Here, Arabella darling, here is a book for you. Look—aren't they pretty pictures?

ARABELLA. Is it a story, papa? I don't care for stories in general. I like something instructive and serious. Grandmamma Bonnington and grandpapa say——

GEORGE. He's *not* your grandpapa.

ARABELLA. He *is* my grandpapa.

GEORGE. Oh, you great story! Look! look! there's a cab.

[*Runs out. The head of a hansom cab is seen over the garden-gate. Bell rings. Page comes. Altercation between Cabman and Captain Touchit appears to go on, during which—*

MILLIKEN. Come and kiss your old father, Arabella. He's hungry for kisses.

ARABELLA. Don't. I want to go and look at the cab; and to tell Captain Touchit that he mustn't use naughty words.

[*Runs towards garden. Page is seen carrying a carpet-bag.*

Enter TOUCHIT *through the open window, smoking a cigar.*

TOUCHIT. How d'ye do, Milliken? How are tallows, hey, my noble merchant? I have brought my bag, and intend to sleep——

GEORGE. I say, godpapa——

TOUCHIT. Well, godson!

GEORGE. Give us a cigar!

TOUCHIT. Oh, you *enfant terrible!*

MILLIKEN (*wheezily*). Ah—ahem——George Touchit; you wouldn't mind—a—smoking that cigar in the garden, would you? Ah—ah!

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TOUCHIT. Hullo! What's in the wind now? You used to be a most inveterate smoker, Horace.

MILLIKEN. The fact is—my mother-in-law—Lady Kicklebury—doesn't like it, and while she's with us, you know——

TOUCHIT. Of course, of course (*throws away cigar*). I beg her Ladyship's pardon. I remember when you were courting her daughter she used not to mind it.

MILLIKEN. Don't—don't allude to those times.

[*He looks up at his wife's picture.*

GEORGE. My mamma was a Kicklebury. The Kicklebury's are the oldest family in all the world. My name is George Kicklebury Milliken, of Pigeoncot, Hants; the Grove, Richmond, Surrey; and Portland Place, London, Esquire—my name is.

TOUCHIT. You have forgotten Billiter Street, hemp and tallow merchant.

GEORGE. Oh, bother! I don't care about that. I shall leave that when I'm a man: when I'm a man and come into my property.

MILLIKEN. You come into your property?

GEORGE. I shall, you know, when you're dead, papa. I shall have this house, and Pigeoncot; and the house in town—no, I don't mind about the house in town—and I shan't let Bella live with me—no, I won't.

BELLA. No; *I* won't live with *you*. And *I'll* have Pigeoncot.

GEORGE. You shan't have Pigeoncot. I'll have it: and the ponies: and I won't let you ride them—and the dogs, and you shan't have even a puppy to play with—and the dairy—and won't I have as much cream as I like—that's all!

TOUCHIT. What a darling boy! Your children are brought up beautifully, Milliken. It's quite delightful to see them together.

GEORGE. And I shall sink the name of Milliken, I shall.

MILLIKEN. Sink the name? why, George?

GEORGE. Because the Millikens are nobodies — grandmamma says they are nobodies. The Kicklebury's are gentlemen, and came over with William the Conqueror.

BELLA. I know when that was. One thousand one hundred and onety-one!

GEORGE. Bother when they came over! But I know this, when I come into the property I shall sink the name of Milliken.

MILLIKEN. So you are ashamed of your father's name, are you, George, my boy?

GEORGE. Ashamed! No, I ain't ashamed. Only Kicklebury is sweller. I know it is. Grandmamma says so.

BELLA. *My* grandmamma does not say so. *My* dear grandmamma says that family pride is sinful, and all belongs to this

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wicked world; and that in a very few years what our names are will not matter.

GEORGE. Yes, she says so because her father kept a shop; and so did pa's father keep a sort of shop—only pa's a gentleman now.

TOUCHIT. Darling child! How I wish I were married! If I had such a dear boy as you, George, do you know what I would give him?

GEORGE (*quite pleased*). What would you give him, godpapa?

TOUCHIT. I would give him as sound a flogging as ever boy had, my darling. I would whip this nonsense out of him. I would send him to school, where I would pray that he might be well thrashed: and if when he came home he was still ashamed of his father, I would put him apprentice to a chimney-sweep—that's what I would do.

GEORGE. I'm glad you're not my father, that's all.

BELLA. And *I'm* glad you're not my father, because you are a wicked man!

MILLIKEN. Arabella!

BELLA. Grandmamma says so. He is a worldly man, and the world is wicked. And he goes to the play: and he smokes, and he says——

TOUCHIT. Bella, what do I say?

BELLA. Oh, something dreadful! You know you do! I heard you say it to the cabman.

TOUCHIT. So I did, so I did! He asked me fifteen shillings from Piccadilly, and I told him to go to—to somebody whose name begins with a D.

CHILDREN. Here's another carriage passing!

BELLA. The Lady Rumble's carriage.

GEORGE. No, it ain't: it's Captain Boxer's carriage.

[*They run into the garden.*

TOUCHIT. And this is the pass to which you have brought yourself, Horace Milliken! Why, in your wife's time, it was better than this, my poor fellow!

MILLIKEN. Don't speak of her in *that* way, George Touchit!

TOUCHIT. What have I said? I am only regretting her loss for your sake. She tyrannised over you; turned your friends out of doors; took your name out of your Clubs; dragged you about from party to party, though you can no more dance than a bear, and from opera to opera, though you don't know "God Save the Queen" from "Rule Britannia." You don't, sir; you know you don't. But Arabella was better than her mother, who has taken possession of you since your widowhood.

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MILLIKEN. My dear fellow! no, she hasn't. There's *my* mother.

TOUCHIT. Yes, to be sure, there's Mrs. Bonnington, and they quarrel over you like the two ladies over the baby before King Solomon.

MILLIKEN. Play the satirist, my good friend! laugh at my weakness!

TOUCHIT. I know you to be as plucky a fellow as ever stepped, Milliken, when a man's in the case. I know you and I stood up to each other for an hour and a half at Westminster.

MILLIKEN. Thank you! We were both dragons of war! tremendous champions! Perhaps *I am* a little soft as regards women. I know my weakness well enough; but in my case what is my remedy? Put yourself in my position. Be a widower with two young children. What is more natural than that the mother of my poor wife should come and superintend my family? My own mother can't. She has a half-dozen of little half brothers and sisters, and a husband of her own to attend to. I daresay Mr. Bonnington and my mother will come to dinner to-day.

TOUCHIT. Of course they will, my poor old Milliken; you don't dare to dine without them.

MILLIKEN. Don't go on in that manner, George Touchit! Why should not my stepfather and my mother dine with me? I can afford it. I am a domestic man and like to see my relations about me. I am in the City all day.

TOUCHIT. Luckily for you.

MILLIKEN. And my pleasure of an evening is to sit under my own vine and under my own fig tree with my own olive-branches round about me; to sit by my fire with my children at my knees; to coze over a snug bottle of claret after dinner with a friend like you to share it; to see the young folks at the breakfast-table of a morning, and to kiss them and so off to business with a cheerful heart. This was my scheme in marrying, had it pleased Heaven to prosper my plan. When I was a boy, and came from school and college, I used to see Mr. Bonnington, my father-in-law, with *his* young ones clustering round about him, so happy to be with him! so eager to wait on him! all down on their little knees round my mother before breakfast or jumping up on his after dinner. It was who should reach his hat, and who should bring his coat, and who should fetch his umbrella, and who should get the last kiss.

TOUCHIT. What? didn't he kiss *you?* Oh, the hard-hearted old ogre!

MILLIKEN. *Don't*, Touchit! Don't laugh at Mr. Bonnington! He is as good a fellow as ever breathed. Between you and me,

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as my half brothers and sisters increased and multiplied year after year, I used to feel rather lonely, rather bowled out, you understand. But I saw them so happy that I longed to have a home of my own. When my mother proposed Arabella for me (for she and Lady Kicklebury were immense friends at one time), I was glad enough to give up Clubs and bachelorhood, and to settle down as a married man. My mother acted for the best. My poor wife's character, my mother used to say, changed after marriage. I was not as happy as I hoped to be; but I tried for it. George, I am not so comfortable now as I might be. A house without a mistress, with two mothers-in-law reigning over it—one worldly and aristocratic, another what you call serious, though she don't mind a rubber of whist: I give you my honour my mother plays a game at whist, and an uncommonly good game too—each woman dragging over a child to her side: of course such a family cannot be comfortable. (*Bell rings.*) There's the first dinner-bell. Go and dress, for Heaven's sake!

TOUCHIT. Why dress? There is no company!

MILLIKEN. Why? ah! her Ladyship likes it, you see. And it costs nothing to humour her. Quick! for she don't like to be kept waiting.

TOUCHIT. Horace Milliken! what a pity it is the law declares a widower shall not marry his wife's mother! She would marry you else,—she would, on my word.

Enter JOHN.

JOHN. I have took the Captain's things in the blue room, sir.

[*Exeunt gentlemen, John arranges tables, &c.*

Ha! Mrs. Prior! I ain't partial to Mrs. Prior. I think she's an artful old dodger, Mrs. Prior. I think there's mystery in her unfathomable pockets, and schemes in the folds of her umbrella. But—but she's Julia's mother, and for the beloved one's sake I am civil to her.

MRS. PRIOR. Thank you, Charles (*to the Page, who has been seen to let her in at the garden-gate*), I am so much obliged to you! Good afternoon, Mr. Howell. Is my daughter—are the darling children well? Oh, I am quite tired and weary! Three horrid omnibuses were full, and I have had to walk the whole weary long way. Ah, times are changed with me, Mr. Howell! Once when I was young and strong, I had my husband's carriage to ride in.

JOHN (*aside*). His carriage! his coal-waggon! I know well enough who old Prior was. A merchant? yes, a pretty merchant!

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kep' a lodging-house, share in a barge, touting for orders, and at last a snug little place in the *Gazette*.

MRS. PRIOR. How is your cough, Mr. Howell? I have brought you some lozenges for it (*takes numberless articles from her pocket*), and if you would take them of a night and morning—oh, indeed, you would get better! The late Sir Henry Halford recommended them to Mr. Prior. He was his late Majesty's physician and ours. You know we have seen happier times, Mr. Howell. Oh, I am quite tired and faint.

JOHN. Will you take anything before the schoolroom tea, ma'am? You will stop to tea, I hope, with Miss Prior, and our young folks?

MRS. PRIOR. Thank you: a little glass of wine when one is so faint—a little crumb of biscuit when one is so old and tired! I have not been accustomed to want, you know; and in my poor dear Mr. Prior's time——

JOHN. I'll fetch some wine, ma'am. [*Exit to the dining-room.*

MRS. PRIOR. Bless the man, how abrupt he is in his manner! He quite shocks a poor lady who has been used to better days. What's here? Invitations—ho! Bills for Lady Kicklebury! *They* are not paid. Where is Mr. M. going to dine, I wonder? Captain and Mrs. Hopkinson, Sir John and Lady Tomkinson, request the pleasure. Request the pleasure! Of course they do. They are always asking Mr. M. to dinner. They have daughters to marry, and Mr. M. is a widower with three thousand a year, every shilling of it. I must tell Lady Kicklebury. He must never go to these places—never, never—mustn't be allowed.

[*While talking, she opens all the letters on the table, rummages the portfolio and writing-box, looks at cards on mantelpiece, work in work-basket, tries tea-box, and shows the greatest activity and curiosity.*

Re-enter JOHN, *bearing a tray with cakes, a decanter, &c.*

Thank you, thank you, Mr. Howell! Oh, oh, dear me, not so much as that! Half a glass, and *one* biscuit, please. What elegant sherry! (*Sips a little, and puts down glass on tray.*) Do you know, I remember in better days, Mr. Howell, when my poor dear husband——

JOHN. Beg your pardon. There's Milliken's bell going like mad. [*Exit John.*

MRS. PRIOR. What an abrupt person! Oh, but it's comfortable, this wine is! And—and I think how my poor Charlotte would like a little—she so weak, and ordered wine by the medical

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man! And when dear Adolphus comes home from Christ's Hospital, quite tired, poor boy, and hungry, wouldn't a bit of nice cake do him good? Adolphus is so fond of plum-cake, the darling child! And so is Frederick, little saucy rogue; and I'll give them *my* piece, and keep my glass of wine for my dear delicate angel Shatty!

[*Takes bottle and paper out of her pocket, cuts off a great slice of cake, and pours wine from wine-glass and decanter into bottle.*

Enter PAGE.

PAGE. Master George and Miss Bella is going to have their teas down here with Miss Prior, Mrs. Prior, and she's up in the schoolroom, and my Lady says you may stay to tea.

MRS. PRIOR. Thank you, Charles! How tall you grow! Those trousers would fit my darling Frederick to a nicety. Thank you, Charles! *I* know the way to the nursery. [*Exit Mrs. P.*

PAGE. Know the way! I believe she *do* know the way. Been a having cake and wine. Howell always gives her cake and wine —jolly cake, ain't it? and wine, oh, my!

Re-enter JOHN.

JOHN. You young gormandising cormorant! What! five meals a day ain't enough for you! What! beer ain't good enough for you, hey? [*Pulls boy's ears.*

PAGE (*crying*). Oh, oh, do-o-n't, Mr. Howell! I only took half a glass, upon my honour.

JOHN. Your a-honour, you lying young vagabond! I wonder the ground don't open and swallow you. Half a glass! (*Holds up decanter.*) You've took half a bottle, you young Ananias! Mark this, sir! When I was a boy, a boy on my promotion, a child kindly took in from charity-school, a horphan in buttons like you, I never lied; no, nor never stole, and you've done both, you little scoundrel! Don't tell *me*, sir! there's plums on your coat, crumbs on your cheek, and you smell sherry, sir! I ain't time to whop you now, but come to my pantry to-night after you've took the tray down. Come *without your jacket on*, sir, and *then* I'll teach you what it is to lie and steal. There's the outer bell. Scud, you vagabond!

Enter LADY K.

LADY K. What was that noise, pray?

JOHN. A difference between me and young Page, my Lady. I was instructing him to keep his hands from picking and steal-

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ing. I was learning him his lesson, my Lady, and he was a-crying it out.

LADY K. It seems to me you are most unkind to that boy, Howell. He is my boy, sir. He comes from my estate. I will not have him ill-used. I think you presume on your long services. I shall speak to my son-in-law about you. ("Yes, my Lady; no, my Lady; very good, my Lady." *John has answered each sentence as she is speaking, and exit gravely bowing.*) That man must quit the house. Horace says he can't do without him, but he *must* do without him. My poor dear Arabella was fond of him, but he presumes on that defunct angel's partiality. Horace says this person keeps all his accounts, sorts all his letters, manages all his affairs, may be trusted with untold gold, and rescued little George out of the fire. Now I have come to live with my son-in-law, *I* will keep his accounts, sort his letters, and take charge of his money: and if little Georgy gets into the grate, *I* will take him out of the fire. What is here? Invitation from Captain and Mrs. Hopkinson. Invitation from Sir John and Lady Tomkinson, who don't even ask *me!* Monstrous! he never shall go—he shall not go!

[*Mrs. Prior has re-entered; she drops a very low curtsey to Lady K., as the latter, perceiving her, lays the cards down.*

MRS. PRIOR. Ah, dear madam! how kind your Ladyship's message was to the poor lonely widow-woman! Oh, how thoughtful it was of your Ladyship to ask me to stay to tea!

LADY K. With your daughter and the children. Indeed, my good Mrs. Prior, you are very welcome!

MRS. PRIOR. Ah! but isn't it a cause of thankfulness to be *made* welcome? Oughtn't I to be grateful for these blessings?—yes, I say *blessings*. And I am—I am, Lady Kicklebury—to the mother—of—that angel who is gone. (*Points to the picture.*) It was your sainted daughter left us—left my child to the care of Mr. Milliken, and—and you, who are now his guardian angel I may say. You *are*, Lady Kicklebury—you are. I say to my girl, Julia, Lady Kicklebury is Mr. Milliken's guardian angel, is *your* guardian angel—for without you could she keep her place as governess to these darling children? It would tear her heart in two to leave them, and yet she would be forced to do so. You know that some one—shall I hesitate to say whom *I mean*?—that Mr. Milliken's mother, excellent lady though she is, does not love my child because *you* love her. You *do* love her, Lady Kicklebury, and oh! a mother's fond heart pays you back! But for you, my poor Julia must go—go, and leave the children whom a dying angel confided to her!

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LADY K. Go! no, never! not whilst *I* am in this house, Mrs. Prior. Your daughter is a well-behaved young woman: you have confided to me her long engagement to Lieutenant—Lieutenant What-d'-you-call-'im, in the Indian service. She has been very, very good to my grandchildren—she brought them over from Naples when my—my angel of an Arabella died there, and I will protect Miss Prior.

MRS. PRIOR. Bless you, bless you, noble, admirable woman! Don't take it away! I must, I *will* kiss your dear generous hand! Take a mother's, a widow's blessings, Lady Kicklebury—the blessings of one who has known misfortune and seen better days, and thanks Heaven—yes, Heaven!—for the protectors she has found!

LADY K. You said—you had—several children, I think, my good Mrs. Prior?

MRS. PRIOR. Three boys—one, my eldest blessing, is in a wine-merchant's office—ah, if Mr. Milliken *would* but give him an order! an order from *this* house! an order from Lady Kicklebury's son-in-law!——

LADY K. It shall be done, my good Prior—we will see.

MRS. PRIOR. Another, Adolphus, dear fellow! is in Christ's Hospital. It was dear good Mr. Milliken's nomination. Frederick is at Merchant Taylors': my darling Julia pays his schooling. Besides, I have two girls—Amelia, quite a little toddles, just the size, though not so beautiful—but in a mother's eyes all children are lovely, dear Lady Kicklebury—just the size of your dear granddaughter, whose clothes would fit her, I am sure. And my second, Charlotte, a girl as tall as your Ladyship, though not with so fine a figure. "Ah, no, Shatty!" I say to her, "you are as tall as our dear patroness, Lady Kicklebury, whom you long so to see; but you have not got her Ladyship's carriage and figure, child." Five children have I, left fatherless and penniless by my poor dear husband—but Heaven takes care of the widow and orphan, madam—and Heaven's *best creatures* feed them!—*you* know whom I mean.

LADY K. Should you not like, would you object to take—a frock or two of little Arabella's to your child? and if Pinhorn, my maid, will let me, Mrs. Prior, I will see if I cannot find something against winter for your second daughter, as you say we are of a size.

MRS. PRIOR. The widow's and orphans' blessings upon you! I said my Charlotte was as tall, but I never said she had such a figure as yours—who has?

PAGE (*announces*). Mrs. Bonnington!

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Enter Mrs. Bonnington.

Mrs. B. How do you do, Lady Kicklebury?

Lady K. My dear Mrs. Bonnington! and you come to dinner, of course?

Mrs. B. To dine with my own son, I may take the liberty. How are my grandchildren? my darling little Emily, is she well, Mrs. Prior?

Lady K. (*aside*). Emily? why does she not call the child by her blessed mother's name of Arabella? (*To Mrs. B.*) *Arabella* is quite well, Mrs. Bonnington. Mr. Squillings said it was nothing; only her Grandmamma Bonnington spoiling her, as usual. Mr. Bonnington and all your numerous young folk are well, I hope?

Mrs. B. My family are all in perfect health, I thank you. Is Horace come home from the City?

Lady K. Goodness! there's the dinner-bell,—I must run to dress.

Mrs. Prior. Shall I come with you, dear Lady Kicklebury?

Lady K. Not for worlds, my good Mrs. Prior.

[*Exit Lady K.*

Mrs. Prior. How do you do, my *dear* madam? Is dear Mr. Bonnington *quite* well? What a sweet, sweet sermon he gave us last Sunday! I often say to my girl, I must not go to hear Mr. Bonnington, I really must not, he makes me cry so. Oh! he is a great and gifted man, and shall I not have one glimpse of him?

Mrs. B. Saturday evening, my good Mrs. Prior. Don't you know that my husband never goes out on Saturday, having his sermon to compose?

Mrs. P. Oh, those dear dear sermons! Do you know, madam, that my little Adolphus, for whom your son's bounty procured his place at Christ's Hospital, was very much touched indeed, the dear child, with Mr. Bonnington's discourse last Sunday three weeks, and refused to play marbles afterwards at school? The wicked naughty boys beat the poor child; but Adolphus has his consolation! Is Master Edward well, ma'am, and Master Robert, and Master Frederick, and dear little funny Master William?

Mrs. B. Thank you, Mrs. Prior; you have a good heart, indeed!

Mrs. P. Ah, what blessings those dears are to you! I wish your dearest little *grandson*——

Mrs. B. The little naughty wretch! Do you know, Mrs. Prior, my grandson, George Milliken, spilt the ink over my dear husbands' bands, which he keeps in his great dictionary; and fought with my

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child, Frederick, who is three years older than George—actually beat his own uncle!

MRS. P. Gracious mercy! Master Frederick was not hurt, I hope?

MRS. B. No; he cried a great deal; and then Robert came up, and that graceless little George took a stick; and then my husband came out, and do you know George Milliken actually kicked Mr. Bonnington on his shins, and butted him like a little naughty ram?

MRS. P. Mercy! mercy! what a little rebel! He is spoiled, dear madam, and you know by *whom*.

MRS. B. By his Grandmamma Kicklebury. I know it. I want my son to whip that child, but he refuses. He will come to no good, that child.

MRS. P. Ah, madam! don't say so! Let us hope for the best. Master George's high temper will subside when certain persons who pet him are gone away.

MRS. B. Gone away! they never will go away! No, mark my words, Mrs. Prior, that woman will never go away. She has made the house her own: she commands everything and everybody in it. She has driven me—me—Mr. Milliken's own mother—almost out of it. She has so annoyed my dear husband, that Mr. Bonnington will scarcely come here. Is she not always sneering at private tutors, because Mr. Bonnington was my son's private tutor, and greatly valued by the late Mr. Milliken? Is she not making constant allusions to old women marrying young men, because Mr. Bonnington happens to be younger than me? I have no words to express my indignation respecting Lady Kicklebury. She never pays any one, and runs up debts in the whole town. Her man Bulkeley's conduct in the neighbourhood is quite—quite——

MRS. P. Gracious goodness, ma'am, you don't say so! And then what an appetite the gormandising monster has? Mary tells me that what he eats in the servants' hall is something perfectly frightful.

MRS. B. Everybody feeds on my poor son! You are looking at my cap, Mrs. Prior? (*During this time Mrs. Prior has been peering into a parcel which Mrs. Bonnington brought in her hand.*) I brought it with me across the Park. I could not walk through the Park in my cap. Isn't it a pretty ribbon, Mrs. Prior?

MRS. P. Beautiful! beautiful! How blue becomes you! Who would think you were the mother of Mr. Milliken and seven other darling children? You can afford what Lady Kicklebury cannot.

MRS. B. And what is that, Prior? A poor clergyman's wife, with a large family, cannot afford much.

MRS. P. He! he! You can afford to be seen as you are, which

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Lady K. cannot. Did you not remark how afraid she seemed lest I should enter her dressing-room? Only Pinhorn, her maid, goes there, to arrange the roses, and the lilies, and the figure—he! he! Oh, what a sweet sweet cap-ribbon! When you have worn it, and are tired of it, you will give it me, won't you? It will be good enough for poor old Martha Prior!

MRS. B. Do you really like it? Call at Greenwood Place, Mrs. Prior, the next time you pay Richmond a visit, and bring your little girl with you, and we will see.

MRS. P. Oh, thank you; thank you! Nay, don't be offended! I must! I must! [*Kisses Mrs. Bonnington.*

MRS. B. There, there! We must not stay chattering! The bell has rung. I must go and put the cap on, Mrs. Prior.

MRS. P. And I may come, too? *You* are not afraid of my seeing your hair, dear Mrs. Bonnington! Mr. Bonnington too young for *you!* Why, you don't look twenty!

MRS. B. Oh, Mrs. Prior!

MRS. P. Well, five-and-twenty, upon my word—not more than five-and-twenty—and that is the very prime of life!

[*Exeunt Mrs. B. and Mrs. P. hand in hand. As Captain Touchit enters dressed for dinner, he bows and passes on.*

TOUCHIT. So, we are to wear our white cravats, and our varnished boots, and dine in ceremony. What is the use of a man being a widower, if he can't dine in his shooting-jacket? Poor Mill! He has the slavery now without the wife. (*He speaks sarcastically to the picture.*) Well, well! Mrs. Milliken! *You* at any rate, are gone; and, with the utmost respect for you, I like your picture even better than the original. Miss Prior!

Enter Miss PRIOR.

MISS PRIOR. I beg pardon. I thought you were gone to dinner. I heard the second bell some time since. [*She is drawing back.*

TOUCHIT. Stop! I say, Julia! (*She returns, he looks at her, takes her hand.*) Why do you dress yourself in this odd poky way? You used to be a very smartly dressed girl. Why do you hide your hair, and wear such a dowdy high gown, Julia?

JULIA. You mustn't call me Julia, Captain Touchit.

TOUCHIT. Why? when I lived in your mother's lodging, I called you Julia. When you brought up the tea, you didn't mind being called Julia. When we used to go to the play with the tickets the Editor gave us, who lived on the second floor——

JULIA. The wretch!—don't speak of him!

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TOUCHIT. Ah! I am afraid he was a sad deceiver, that Editor. He was a very clever fellow. What droll songs he used to sing! What a heap of play-tickets, diorama-tickets, concert-tickets, he used to give you! Did he touch your heart, Julia?

JULIA. Fiddlededee! No man ever touched my heart, Captain Touchit.

TOUCHIT. What! not even Tom Flight, who had the second floor after the Editor left it—and who cried so bitterly at the idea of going out to India without you? You had a *tendre* for him—a little passion—you know you had. Why, even the ladies here know it. Mrs. Bonnington told me that you were waiting for a sweetheart in India, to whom you were engaged; and Lady Kicklebury thinks you are dying in love for the absent swain.

JULIA. I hope—I hope—you did not contradict them, Captain Touchit?

TOUCHIT. Why not, my dear?

JULIA. May I be frank with you? You were a kind, very kind friend to us—to me in my youth.

TOUCHIT. I paid my lodgings regularly, and my bills without asking questions. I never weighed the tea in the caddy, or counted the lumps of sugar, or heeded the rapid consumption of my *liqueur*——

JULIA. Hush, hush! I know they were taken. I know you were very good to us. You helped my poor papa out of many a difficulty.

TOUCHIT (*aside*). Tipsy old coal-merchant! I did, and he helped himself too.

JULIA. And you were always our best friend, Captain Touchit. When our misfortunes came, you got me this situation with Mrs. Milliken—and, and—don't you see?——

TOUCHIT. Well—what?

JULIA (*laughing*). I think it is best, under the circumstances, that the ladies here should suppose I am engaged to be married—or—or, they might be—might be jealous, you understand. Women are sometimes jealous of others—especially mothers and mothers-in-law.

TOUCHIT. Oh, you arch-schemer! And it is for that you cover up that beautiful hair of yours, and wear that demure cap?

JULIA (*slyly*). I am subject to rheumatism in the head, Captain Touchit.

TOUCHIT. It is for that you put on the spectacles, and make yourself look a hundred years old?

JULIA. My eyes are weak, Captain Touchit.

TOUCHIT. Weak with weeping for Tom Flight. You hypocrite! Show me your eyes!

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MISS P. Nonsense!

TOUCHIT. Show me your eyes, I say, or I'll tell about Tom Flight, and that he has been married at Madras these two years.

MISS P. Oh, you horrid man! (*Takes glasses off.*) There!

TOUCHIT. Translucent orbs! beams of flashing light! lovely lashes veiling celestial brightness! No, they haven't cried much for Tom Flight, that faithless captain! nor for Lawrence O'Reilly, that killing Editor. It is lucky you keep the glasses on them, or they would transfix Horace Milliken, my friend the widower here. *Do* you always wear them when you are alone with him?

MISS P. I never *am* alone with him. Bless me! If Lady Kicklebury thought my eyes were—well, well—you know what I mean,—if she thought her son-in-law looked at me, I should be turned out of doors the next day, I am sure I should. And then, poor Mr. Milliken! he never looks at *me*—Heaven help him! Why, he can't see me for her Ladyship's nose and awful caps and ribbons! He sits and looks at the portrait yonder, and sighs so. He thinks that he is lost in grief for his wife at this very moment.

TOUCHIT. What a woman that was—eh, Julia?—that departed angel! What a temper she had before her departure!

MISS P. But the wind was tempered to the lamb. If she was angry—the lamb was so very lamblike, and meek, and fleecy.

TOUCHIT. And what a desperate flirt the departed angel was! I knew half-a-dozen fellows, before her marriage, whom she threw over because Milliken was so rich.

MISS P. She was consistent at least, and did not change after marriage, as some ladies do; but flirted, as you call it, just as much as before. At Paris, young Mr. Verney, the attaché, was never out of the house: at Rome, Mr. Beard, the artist, was always drawing pictures of her: at Naples, when poor Mr. M. went away to look after his affairs at Saint Petersburg, little Count Posilippo was for ever coming to learn English and practise duets. She scarcely ever saw the poor children. (*Changing her manner as Lady Kicklebury enters.*) Hush—my Lady!

TOUCHIT. You may well say, "poor children," deprived of such a woman! Miss Prior, whom I knew in very early days—as your Ladyship knows—was speaking—was speaking of the loss our poor friend sustained.

LADY K. Ah, sir, what a loss! [*Looking at the picture.*

TOUCHIT. What a woman she was—what a superior creature!

LADY K. A creature—an angel!

TOUCHIT. Mercy upon us! how she and my Lady used to quarrel! (*Aside.*) What a temper!

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LADY K. Hm—oh yes—what a temper! (*Rather doubtfully at first.*)

TOUCHIT. What a loss to Milliken and the darling children!

MISS PRIOR. Luckily they have *you* with them, madam.

LADY K. And I will stay with them, Miss Prior; I will stay with them! I will never part from Horace, I am determined.

MISS P. Ah! I am very glad you stay, for if I had not you for a protector, I think you know I must go, Lady Kicklebury. I think you know there are those who would forget my attachment to these darling children, my services to—to her—and dismiss the poor governess. But while you stay I can stay, dear Lady Kicklebury! With you to defend me from jealousy I need not *quite* be afraid.

LADY K. Of Mrs. Bonnington? Of Mr. Milliken's mother; of the parson's wife who writes out his stupid sermons, and has half-a-dozen children of her own? I should think *not* indeed! *I* am the natural protector of these children. *I* am their mother. *I* have no husband. You *stay* in this house, Miss Prior. You are a faithful attached creature—though you were sent in by somebody I don't like very much.

[*Pointing to Touchit, who went off laughing when Julia began her speech, and is now looking at prints, &c., in next room.*

MISS P. Captain Touchit may not be in all things what one could wish. But his kindness has formed the happiness of my life in making me acquainted with *you*, ma'am: and I am sure you would not have me be ungrateful to him.

LADY K. A most highly principled young woman.

[*Goes out in garden and walks up and down with Captain Touchit.*

Enter MRS. BONNINGTON.

MISS P. Oh, how glad I am you are come, Mrs. Bonnington! Have you brought me that pretty hymn you promised me? You always keep your promises, even to poor governesses. I read dear Mr. Bonnington's sermon! It was so interesting that I really could not think of going to sleep until I had read it all through; it was delightful, but oh! it's still better when he preaches it! I hope I did not do wrong in copying a part of it? I wish to impress it on the children. There are some worldly influences at work with them, dear madam (*looking at Lady K. in the garden*) which I do my feeble effort to—to modify. I wish *you* could come oftener.

MRS. B. I will try, my dear—I will try. Emily has sweet dispositions.

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MISS P. Ah, she takes after her Grandmamma Bonnington!

MRS. B. But George was sadly fractious just now in the schoolroom because I tried him with a tract.

MISS P. Let us hope for better times! Do be with your children, dear Mrs. Bonnington, as constantly as ever you can, for *my* sake as well as theirs! *I* want protection and advice as well as they do. The *governess*, dear lady, looks up to you as well as the pupils; *she* wants the teaching which you and dear Mr. Bonnington can give her! Ah, why could not Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington come and live here, I often think! The children would have companions in their dear young uncles and aunts; so pleasant it would be. The house is quite large enough: that is, if her Ladyship did not occupy the three south rooms in the left wing. Ah, why, *why* couldn't you come?

MRS. B. You are a kind affectionate creature, Miss Prior. I do not very much like the gentleman who recommended you to Arabella, you know. But I do think he sent my son a good governess for his children. [*Ladies walk up and down in front garden.*

TOUCHIT *enters.*

TOUCHIT. Miss Julia Prior, you are a wonder! I watch you with respect and surprise.

MISS P. Me! what have I done? a poor friendless governess—respect *me?*

TOUCHIT. I have a mind to tell those two ladies what I think of Miss Julia Prior. If they knew you as I know you, O Julia Prior, what a short reign yours would be!

MISS P. I have to manage them a little. Each separately it is not so difficult. But when they are together, oh, it is very hard sometimes.

Enter MILLIKEN *dressed, shakes hands with* MISS P.

MILLIKEN. Miss Prior! are you well? Have the children been good? and learned all their lessons?

MISS P. The children are pretty good, sir.

MILLIKEN. Well, that's a great deal as times go. Do not bother them with too much learning, Miss Prior. Let them have an easy life. Time enough for trouble when age comes.

Enter JOHN.

JOHN. Dinner, sir. [*And exit.*

MILLIKEN. Dinner, ladies. My Lady Kicklebury.
[*Gives arm to Lady K.*

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LADY K. My dear Horace, you *shouldn't* shake hands with Miss Prior. You should keep people of that class at a distance, my dear creature.

[*They go in to dinner, Captain Touchit following with Mrs. Bonnington. As they go out, enter Mary with children's tea-tray, &c., Children following, and after them Mrs. Prior. Mary gives her tea.*

MRS. PRIOR. Thank you, Mary! You are so very kind! Oh, what delicious tea!

GEORGE. I say, Mrs. Prior, I daresay you would like to dine best, wouldn't you?

MRS. P. Bless you, my darling love, I had my dinner at one o'clock with my children at home.

GEORGE. So had we: but we go in to dessert very often; and then don't we have cakes and oranges and candied peel and macaroons and things! We are not to go in to-day; because Bella ate so many strawberries she made herself ill.

BELLA. So did you.

GEORGE. I'm a man, and men eat more than women, twice as much as women. When I'm a man I'll eat as much cake as ever I like. I say, Mary, give us the marmalade.

MRS. P. Oh, what nice marmalade! *I* know of some poor children——

MISS P. Mamma! don't, mamma. (*In an imploring tone.*)

MRS. P. I know of two poor children at home, who have very seldom nice marmalade and cake, young people.

GEORGE. You mean Adolphus and Frederick and Amelia, your children. Well, they shall have marmalade and cake.

BELLA. Oh yes! I'll give them mine.

MRS. P. Darling dearest child!

GEORGE (*his mouth full*). I won't give 'em mine; but they can have another pot, you know. You have always got a basket with you, Mrs. Prior. I know you have. You had it that day you took the cold fowl.

MRS. P. For the poor blind black man! oh, how thankful he was!

GEORGE. I don't know whether it was for a black man. Mary, get us another pot of marmalade.

MARY. I don't know, Master George.

GEORGE. I *will* have another pot of marmalade. If you don't, I'll—I'll smash everything—I will.

BELLA. Oh, you naughty rude boy!

GEORGE. Hold *your* tongue. I *will* have it. Mary shall go and get it.

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MRS. P. Do humour him, Mary; and I'm sure my poor children at home will be the better for it.

GEORGE. There's your basket! now put this cake in, and this pat of butter, and this sugar. Hurray, hurray! Oh, what jolly fun! Tell Adolphus and Amelia I sent it to them—tell 'em they shall never want for anything as long as George Kicklebury Milliken, Esquire, can give it 'em. Did Adolphus like my grey coat that I didn't want?

MISS P. You did not give him your new grey coat?

GEORGE. Don't you speak to me; I'm going to school—I'm not going to have no more governesses soon.

MRS. P. Oh, my dear Master George, what a nice coat it is, and how well my poor boy looked in it!

MISS P. Don't, mamma! I pray and entreat you not to take the things!

Enter JOHN *from dining-room with a tray.*

JOHN. Some cream, some jelly, a little champagne, Miss Prior! I thought you might like some.

GEORGE. Oh, jolly! give us hold of the jelly! give us a glass of champagne.

JOHN. I will not give you any.

GEORGE. I'll smash every glass in the room, if you don't; I'll cut my fingers; I'll poison myself—there!—I'll eat all this sealing-wax if you don't, and it's rank poison, you know it is.

MRS. P. My dear Master George! [*Exit John.*

GEORGE. Ha, ha! I knew you'd give it me; another boy taught me that.

BELLA. And a very naughty rude boy.

GEORGE. He, he, he! hold your tongue, miss! And said he always got wine so: and so I used to do it to my poor mamma, Mrs. Prior. Usedn't to like mamma much.

BELLA. Oh, you wicked boy!

GEORGE. She usedn't to see us much. She used to say I tried her nerves; what's nerves, Mrs. Prior? Give us some more champagne! Will have it! Ha, ha, ha! ain't it jolly? Now I'll go out and have a run in the garden. [*Runs into garden.*

MRS. P. And you, my dear?

BELLA. I shall go and resume the perusal of the "Pilgrim's Progress," which my grandpapa, Mr. Bonnington, sent me.

[*Exit Arabella.*

MISS P. How those children are spoilt! Goodness, what can I do? If I correct one, he flies to Grandmamma Kicklebury; if I speak to another, she appeals to Grandmamma Bonnington.

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When I was alone with them, I had them in something like order. Now, between the one grandmother and the other, the children are going to ruin, and so would the house too, but that Howell—that odd, rude, but honest and intelligent creature, I must say—keeps it up. It is wonderful how a person in his rank of life should have instructed himself so. He really knows—I really think he knows more than I do myself.

MRS. P. Julia dear!

MISS P. What is it, mamma?

MRS. P. Your little sister wants some underclothing sadly, Julia dear, and poor Adolphus's shoes are quite worn out.

MISS P. I thought so; I have given you all I could, mamma.

MRS. P. Yes, my love! you are a good love, and generous, Heaven knows, to your poor old mother who has seen better days. If we had not wanted, would I have ever allowed you to be a governess—a poor degraded governess? If that brute O'Reilly who lived on our second floor had not behaved so shamefully wicked to you, and married Miss Flack, the singer, might you not have been editress of the *Champion of Liberty* at this very moment, and had your opera-box every night?

[*She drinks champagne while talking, and excites herself.*

MISS P. Don't take that, mamma!

MRS. P. Don't take it? why, it costs nothing; Milliken can afford it. Do you suppose I get champagne every day? I might have had it as a girl when I first married your father, and we kep' our gig and horse, and lived at Clapham, and had the best of everything. But the coal-trade is not what it was, Julia. We met with misfortunes, Julia, and we went into poverty: and your poor father went into the Bench for twenty-three months—two year all but a month he did—and my poor girl was obliged to dance at the "Coburg Theatre"—yes, you were, at ten shillings a week, in the Oriental ballet of "The Bulbul and the Rose": you were, my poor darling child!

MISS P. Hush, hush, mamma!

MRS. P. And we kep' a lodging-house in Bury Street, Saint James's, which your father's brother furnished for us, who was an extensive oil-merchant. He brought you up; and afterwards he quarrelled with my poor James, Robert Prior did, and he died, not leaving us a shilling. And my dear eldest boy went into a wine-merchant's office: and my poor darling Julia became a governess, when you had had the best of education at Clapham; you had, Julia. And to think that you were obliged, my blessed thing, to go on in the Oriental ballet of "The Rose and the Bul——"

MISS P. Mamma, hush, hush! forget that story.

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Enter PAGE *from dining-room.*

PAGE. Miss Prior! please, the ladies are coming from the dining-room. Mrs. B. have had her two glasses of port, and her Ladyship is now a-telling the story about the Prince of Wales when she danced with him at Carlton House. [*Exit Page.*

MISS P. Quick, quick! There, take your basket! Put on your bonnet, and good night, mamma. Here, here is a half-sovereign and three shillings: it is all the money I have in the world; take it, and buy the shoes for Adolphus.

MRS. P. And the underclothing, my love—little Amelia's underclothing?

MISS P. We will see about it. Good night. (*Kisses her.*) Don't be seen here,—Lady K. doesn't like it.

Enter Gentlemen *and* Ladies *from dining-room.*

LADY K. We follow the Continental fashion. We don't sit after dinner, Captain Touchit.

TOUCHIT. Confound the Continental fashion! I like to sit a little while after dinner. (*Aside.*)

MRS. B. So does my dear Mr. Bonnington, Captain Touchit. He likes a little port wine after dinner.

TOUCHIT. I'm not surprised at it, ma'am.

MRS. B. When did you say your son was coming, Lady Kicklebury?

LADY K. My Clarence? He will be here immediately, I hope, the dear boy! You know my Clarence?

TOUCHIT. Yes, ma'am.

LADY K. And like him, I'm sure, Captain Touchit! Everybody does like Clarence Kicklebury.

TOUCHIT. The confounded young scamp! I say, Horace, do you like your brother-in-law?

MILLIKEN. Well—I—I can't say—I—like him—in fact, I don't. But that's no reason why his mother shouldn't.

[*During this, Howell, preceded by Bulkeley, hands round coffee. The garden without has darkened, as if evening. Bulkeley is going away without offering coffee to Miss Prior. John stamps on his foot, and points to her. Captain Touchit, laughing, goes up and talks to her now the servants are gone.*

MRS. B. Horace! I must tell you that the waste at your table is shocking. What is the need of opening all this wine? You and Lady Kicklebury were the only persons who took champagne.

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TOUCHIT. I never drink it—never touch the rubbish! Too old a stager!

LADY K. Port, I think, is your favourite, Mrs. Bonnington?

MRS. B. My dear lady, I do not mean that you should not have champagne, if you like. Pray, pray, don't be angry! But why on earth, for you, who take so little, and Horace, who only drinks it to keep you company, should not Howell open a pint instead of a great large bottle?

LADY K. Oh, Howell! Howell! We must not mention Howell, my dear Mrs. Bonnington. Howell is faultless! Howell has the keys of everything! Howell is not to be controlled in anything! Howell is to be at liberty to be rude to my servant!

MILLIKEN. Is that all? I am sure I should have thought your man was big enough to resent any rudeness from poor little Howell.

LADY K. Horace! Excuse me for saying that you don't know —the—the class of servant to whom Bulkeley belongs. I had him, as a great favour, from Lord Toddleby. That class of servant is accustomed generally not to go out single.

MILLIKEN. Unless they are two behind a carriage-perch, they pine away, as one love-bird does without his mate!

LADY K. No doubt! no doubt! I only say you are not accustomed here—in this kind of establishment, you understand—to that class of——

MRS. B. Lady Kicklebury! is my son's establishment not good enough for any powdered monster in England? Is the house of a British merchant?——

LADY K. My dear creature! my dear creature! it *is* the house of a British merchant, and a very comfortable house.

MRS. B. Yes, as you find it.

LADY K. Yes, as I find it, when I come to take care of my departed angel's children, Mrs. Bonnington—(*pointing to picture*) —of *that* dear seraph's orphans, Mrs. Bonnington. *You* cannot. You have other duties—other children—a husband at home in delicate health, who——

MRS. B. Lady Kicklebury, no one shall say I don't take care of my dear husband!

MILLIKEN. My dear mother! My dear Lady Kicklebury! (*To T. who has come forward.*) They spar so every night they meet, Touchit. Ain't it hard?

LADY K. I say you *do* take care of Mr. Bonnington, Mrs. Bonnington, my dear creature! and that is why you can't attend to Horace. And as he is of a very easy temper—except sometimes with his poor Arabella's mother—he allows all his tradesmen to cheat him, all his servants to cheat him, Howell to be rude

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to everybody—to me amongst other people, and why not to my servant Bulkeley, with whom Lord Toddleby's groom of the chambers gave me the very highest character?

MRS. B. I'm surprised that noblemen *have* grooms in their chambers. I should think they were much better in the stables. I am sure I always think so when we dine with Doctor Clinker. His man does bring such a smell of the stable with him.

LADY K. He! he! you mistake, my dearest creature! Your poor mother mistakes, my good Horace. You have lived in a quiet and most respectable sphere—but not—not——

MRS. B. Not what, Lady Kicklebury? We have lived at Richmond twenty years—in my late husband's time—when we saw a great deal of company, and when this dear Horace was a dear boy at Westminster School. And we have *paid* for everything we have had for twenty years, and we have owed not a penny to any *tradesman*, though we mayn't have had *powdered footmen six feet high*, who were impertinent to all the maids in the place—— Don't! I *will* speak, Horace—but servants who loved us, and who lived in our families.

MILLIKEN. Mamma, now, my dear good old mother! I am sure Lady Kicklebury meant no harm.

LADY K. Me! my dear Horace! harm! What harm could I mean?

MILLIKEN. Come! let us have a game at whist. Touchit, will you make a fourth? They go on so every night almost. Ain't it a pity, now?

TOUCHIT. Miss Prior generally plays, doesn't she?

MILLIKEN. And a very good player, too. But I thought you might like it.

TOUCHIT. Well, not exactly. I don't like sixpenny points, Horace, or quarrelling with old dragons about the odd trick. I will go and smoke a cigar on the terrace, and contemplate the silver Thames, the darkling woods, the starry hosts of heaven. I —I like smoking better than playing whist.

[*Milliken rings bell.*

MILLIKEN. Ah, George! you're not fit for domestic felicity.

TOUCHIT. No, not exactly.

Enter HOWELL.

MILLIKEN. Lights and a whist table. Oh, I see you bring 'em. You know everything I want. He knows everything I want, Howell does. Let us cut. Miss Prior, you and I are partners!

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ACT II

SCENE.—*As before.*

LADY K. Don't smoke, you naughty boy! I don't like it. Besides, it will encourage your brother-in-law to smoke.

CLARENCE K. Anything to oblige you, I'm sure. But can't do without it, mother; it's good for my health. When I was in the Plungers, our doctor used to say, "You ought never to smoke more than eight cigars a day"—an order, you know, to do it—don't you see?

LADY K. Ah, my child! I am very glad you are not with those unfortunate people in the East.

K. So am I. Sold out just in time. Much better fun being here, than having the cholera at Scutari. Nice house, Milliken's. Snob, but good fellow—good cellar, doosid good cook. Really, that salmi yesterday,—couldn't have it better done at the "Rag" now. You have got into good quarters here, mother.

LADY K. The meals are very good, and the house is very good; the manners are not of the first order. But what can you expect of City people? I always told your poor dear sister, when she married Mr. Milliken, that she might look for everything substantial,—but not manners. Poor dear Arabella *would* marry him.

K. Would! that is a good one, mamma! Why, you made her! It's a dozen years ago. But I recollect, when I came home from Eton, seeing her crying because Charley Tufton——

LADY K. Mr. Tufton had not a shilling to bless himself with. The marriage was absurd and impossible.

K. He hadn't a shilling then. I guess he has plenty now. Elder brother killed, out hunting. Father dead. Tuf a baronet, with four thousand a year if he's a shilling.

LADY K. Not so much.

K. Four thousand if it's a shilling. Why, the property adjoins Kicklebury's—I ought to know. I've shot over it a thousand times. Heh! *I* remember, when I was quite a young 'un, how Arabella used to go out into Tufton Park to meet Charley—and he is a doosid good fellow, and a gentlemanlike fellow, and a doosid deal better than this City fellow.

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LADY K. If you don't like this City fellow, Clarence, why do you come here? why didn't you stop with your elder brother at Kicklebury?

K. Why didn't I? Why didn't *you* stop at Kicklebury, mamma? Because you had notice to quit. Serious daughter-in-law, quarrels about management of the house—row in the building. My brother interferes, and politely requests mamma to shorten her visit. So it is with your other two daughters; so it was with Arabella when she was alive. What shindies you used to have with her, Lady Kicklebury! Heh! I had a row with my brother and sister about a confounded little nursery-maid.

LADY K. Clarence!

K. And so I had notice to quit too. And I'm in very good quarters here, and I intend to stay in 'em, mamma. I say——

LADY K. What do you say?

K. Since I sold out, you know, and the regiment went abroad, confound me, the brutes at the "Rag" will hardly speak to me! I was so ill, I couldn't go. Who the doose can live the life I've led and keep health enough for that infernal Crimea? Besides, how could I help it? I was so cursedly in debt that I was *obliged* to have the money, you know. *You* hadn't got any.

LADY K. Not a halfpenny, my darling. I am dreadfully in debt myself.

K. I know you are. So am I. My brother wouldn't give me any, not a dump. Hang him! Said he had his children to look to. Milliken wouldn't advance me any more—said I did him in that horse transaction. He! he! he! so I did! What had I to do but to sell out? And the fellows cut me, by Jove! Ain't it too bad? I'll take my name off the "Rag," I will, though.

LADY K. We must sow our wild oats, and we must sober down; and we must live here, where the living is very good and very cheap, Clarence, you naughty boy! And we must get you a rich wife. Did you see at church yesterday that young woman in light green, with rather red hair and a pink bonnet?

K. I was asleep, ma'am, most of the time, or I was bookin' up the odds for the Chester Cup. When I'm bookin' up, I think of nothin' else, ma'am,—nothin'.

LADY K. That was Miss Brocksopp—Briggs, Brown, and Brocksopp, the great sugar-bakers. They say she will have eighty thousand pound. We will ask her to dinner here.

K. I say—why the doose do you have such old women to dinner here? Why don't you get some pretty girls? Such a set of confounded old frumps as eat Milliken's mutton I never saw. There's you, and his old mother Mrs. Bonnington, and old Mrs.

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Fogram, and old Miss What's-her-name, the woman with the squint eye, and that immense Mrs. Crowder. It's so stoopid, that if it weren't for Touchit coming down sometimes, and the billiards and boatin', I should die here—expire, by gad! Why don't you have some pretty women into the house, Lady Kicklebury?

LADY K. Why! Do you think I want that picture taken down: and another Mrs. Milliken? Wisehead! If Horace married again, would he be your banker, and keep this house, now that ungrateful son of mine has turned me out of his? No pretty woman shall come into the house whilst I am here.

K. Governess seems a pretty woman: weak eyes, bad figure, poky, badly dressed, but doosid pretty woman.

LADY K. Bah! There is no danger from *her*. She is a most faithful creature, attached to me beyond everything. And her eyes—her eyes are weak with crying for some young man who is in India. She has his miniature in her room, locked up in one of her drawers.

K. Then how the doose did you come to see it?

LADY K. We see a number of things, Clarence. Will you drive with me?

K. Not as I knows on, thank you. No, ma; drivin's *too* slow: and you're going to call on two or three old dowagers in the Park? Thank your Ladyship for the delightful offer.

Enter JOHN.

JOHN. Please, sir, here's the man with the bill for the boats; two pound three.

K. Damn it, pay it—don't bother *me!*

JOHN. Haven't got the money, sir.

LADY K. Howell! I saw Mr. Milliken give you a cheque for twenty-five pounds before he went into town this morning. Look, sir. (*Runs, opens drawer, takes out cheque-book.*) There it is, marked "Howell, £25."

JOHN. Would your Ladyship like to step down into my pantry and see what I've paid with the twenty-five pounds? Did my master leave any orders that your Ladyship was to inspect my accounts?

LADY K. Step down into the pantry! inspect your accounts? I never heard such impertinence. What do you mean, sir?

K. Dammy, sir, what do you mean?

JOHN. I thought as her Ladyship kept a heye over my master's private book, she might like to look at mine too.

LADY K. Upon my word, this insolence is too much.

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JOHN. I beg your Ladyship's pardon. I am sure I have said nothing.

K. Said, sir! your manner is mutinous, by Jove, sir! if I had you in the regiment——

JOHN. I understood that you had left the regiment, sir, just before it went on the campaign, sir.

K. Confound you, sir! [*Starts up.*

LADY K. Clarence, my child, my child!

JOHN. Your Ladyship needn't be alarmed; I'm a little man, my Lady, but I don't think Mr. Clarence was a-goin' for to hit me, my Lady; not before a lady, I'm sure. I suppose, sir, that you *won't* pay the boatman?

K. No, sir, I won't pay him, nor any man who uses this sort of damned impertinence!

JOHN. I told Rullocks, sir, I thought it was *jest* possible you wouldn't. [*Exit.*

K. That's a nice man, that is—an impudent villain!

LADY K. Ruined by Horace's weakness. He ruins everybody, poor good-natured Horace!

K. Why don't you get rid of the blackguard?

LADY K. There is a time for all things, my dear. This man is very convenient to Horace. Mr. Milliken is exceedingly lazy, and Howell spares him a great deal of trouble. Some day or other I shall take all this domestic trouble off his hands. But not yet: your poor brother-in-law is restive, like many weak men. He is subjected to other influences: his odious mother thwarts me a great deal.

K. Why, you used to be the dearest friends in the world. I recollect when I was at Eton——

LADY K. Were; but friendship don't last for ever. Mrs. Bonnington and I have had serious differences since I came to live here: she has a natural jealousy, perhaps, at my superintending her son's affairs. When she ceases to visit at the house, as she very possibly will, things will go more easily; and Mr. Howell will go too, you may depend upon it. I am always sorry when my temper breaks out, as it will sometimes.

K. Won't it, that's all!

LADY K. At his insolence, my temper is high; so is yours, my dear. Calm it for the present, especially as regards Howell.

K. Gad! d'you know I was very nearly pitching into him? But once, one night in the Haymarket, at a lobster-shop, where I was with some fellows, we chaffed some other fellows, and there was one fellah—quite a little fellah—and I pitched into him, and he gave me the most confounded lickin' I ever had in my life, since

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my brother Kicklebury licked me when we were at Eton; and that, you see, was a lesson to me, ma'am. Never trust those little fellows, never chaff 'em: dammy, they may be boxers.

LADY K. You quarrelsome boy! I remember you coming home with your naughty head *so* bruised. (*Looks at watch.*) I must go now to take my drive. [*Exit Lady K.*

K. I owe a doose of a tick at that billiard-room; I shall have that boatman dunnin' me. Why hasn't Milliken got any horses to ride? Hang him! suppose he can't ride—suppose he's a tailor. He ain't *my* tailor, though, though I owe him a doosid deal of money. There goes mamma with that darling nephew and niece of mine.

Enter BULKELEY.

Why haven't you gone with my Lady, you, sir? (*to Bulkeley*).

BULKELEY. My Lady have a-took the pony-carriage, sir; Mrs. Bonnington have a-took the hopen carriage and 'orses, sir, this mornin', which the Bishop of London is 'olding a confirmation at Teddington, sir, and Mr. Bonnington is attending the serimony. And I have told Mr. 'Owell, sir, that my Lady would prefer the hopen carriage, sir, which I like the hexercise myself, sir, and that the pony-carriage was good enough for Mrs. Bonnington, sir; and Mr. 'Owell was very hinsolent to me, sir; and I don't think I can stay in the 'ouse with him.

K. Hold your jaw, sir.

BULKELEY. Yes, sir. [*Exit Bulkeley.*

K. I wonder who that governess is—sang rather prettily last night—wish she'd come and sing now—wish she'd come and amuse me—I've seen her face before—where have I seen her face?—it ain't at all a bad one. What shall I do? dammy, I'll read a book: I've not read a book this ever so long. What's here?

[*Looks amongst books, selects one, sinks down in easy chair so as quite to be lost.*

Enter MISS PRIOR.

MISS PRIOR. There's peace in the house! those noisy children are away with their grandmamma. The weather is beautiful, and I hope they will take a long drive. Now I can have a quiet half-hour, and finish that dear pretty "Ruth"—oh, how it makes me cry, that pretty story!

[*Lays down her bonnet on table—goes to glass—takes off cap and spectacles—arranges her hair—Clarence has got on chair looking at her.*

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K. By Jove! I know who it is now! Remember her as well as possible. Four years ago, when little Foxbury used to dance in the ballet over the water. *Don't* I remember her! She boxed my ears behind the scenes, by jingo! (*Coming forward.*) Miss Pemberton! Star of the ballet! Light of the harem! Don't you remember the grand Oriental ballet of the "Bulbul and the Peri"?

Miss P. Oh! (*screams*). No, n—no, sir. You are mistaken: my name is Prior. I—never was at the "Coburg Theatre." I——

K. (*seizing her hand*). No, you don't, though! What! don't you remember well that little hand slapping this face? which nature hadn't then adorned with whiskers, by gad! You pretend you have forgotten little Foxbury, whom Charley Calverley used to come after, and who used to drive to the "Coburg" every night in her brougham. How did you know it was the "Coburg"? That *is* a good one! *Had* you there, I think.

Miss P. Sir, in the name of Heaven, pity me! I have to keep my mother and my sisters and my brothers. When—when you saw me, we were in great poverty; and almost all the wretched earnings I made at that time were given to my poor father then lying in the Queen's Bench hard by. You know there was nothing against my character—you know there was not. Ask Captain Touchit whether I was not a good girl. It was he who brought me to this house.

K. Touchit! the old villain!

Miss P. I had your sister's confidence. I tended her abroad on her death-bed. I have brought up your nephew and niece. Ask any one if I have not been honest. As a man, as a gentleman, I entreat you to keep my secret! I implore you for the sake of my poor mother and her children! (*kneeling*).

K. By Jove! how handsome you are! How crying becomes your eyes! Get up; get up. Of course I'll keep your secret, but——

Miss P. Ah! ah!

[*She screams as he tries to embrace her. Howell rushes in.*

Howell. Hands off, you little villain! Stir a step, and I'll kill you, if you were a regiment of captains! What! insult this lady who kept watch at your sister's death-bed and has took charge of her children! Don't be frightened, Miss Prior. Julia—dear, dear Julia—I'm by you. If the scoundrel touches you, I'll kill him. I—I love you—there—it's here—love you madly—with all my 'art—my a-heart!

Miss P. Howell—for Heaven's sake, Howell!

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K. Pooh—ooh! (*Bursting with laughter.*) Here's a novel, by jingo! Here's John in love with the governess. Fond of plush, Miss Pemberton—ey? Gad, it's the best thing I ever knew. Saved a good bit, ey, Jeames? Take a public-house? By Jove! I'll buy my beer there.

JOHN. Owe for it, you mean. I don't think your tradesmen profit much by your custom, ex-Cornet Kicklebury.

K. By Jove! I'll do for you, you villain!

JOHN. No, not that way, Captain.

[*Struggles with and throws him.*

K. (*screams*). Hallo, Bulkeley!

[*Bulkeley is seen strolling in the garden.*

Enter BULKELEY.

BULKELEY. What is it, sir?

K. Take this confounded villain off me, and pitch him into the Thames—do you hear?

JOHN. Come here, and I'll break every bone in your hulking body. (*To Bulkeley.*)

BULKELEY. Come, come! whathever his hall this year row about?

MISS P. For Heaven's sake, don't strike that poor man!

BULKELEY. *You* be quiet. What's he a-hittin' about my master for?

JOHN. Take off your hat, sir, when you speak to a lady. (*Takes up a poker.*) And now come on both of you, cowards!

[*Rushes at Bulkeley and knocks his hat off his head.*

BULKELEY (*stepping back*). If you'll put down that there poker, you know, then I'll pitch into you fast enough. But that there poker ain't fair, you know.

K. You villain! of course you will leave this house. And, Miss Prior, I think you will understand that you will go too. I don't think my niece wants to learn *dancin'*, you understand. Good-bye. Here, Bulkeley! [*Gets behind footman and exit.*

MISS P. Do you know the meaning of that threat, Mr. Howell?

JOHN. Yes, Miss Prior.

MISS P. I was a dancer once, for three months, four years ago, when my poor father was in prison.

JOHN. Yes, Miss Prior, I knew it. And I saw you a many times.

MISS P. And you kept my secret?

JOHN. Yes, Ju—Jul—Miss Prior.

MISS P. Thank you, and God bless you, John Howell! There, there. You mustn't! indeed, you mustn't!

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JOHN. You don't remember the printer's boy who used to come to Mr. O'Reilly, and sit in your 'all in Bury Street, Miss Prior? I was that boy. I was a country-bred boy—that is if you called Putney country, and Wimbledon Common and that. I served the Milliken family seven year. I went with Master Horace to College, and then I revolted against service, and I thought I'd be a man and turn printer like Doctor Frankling. And I got in an office: and I went with proofs to Mr. O'Reilly, and I saw you. And though I might have been in love with somebody else before I did—yet it was all hup when I saw you.

MISS P. (*kindly*). You must not talk to me in that way, John Howell.

JOHN. Let's tell the tale out. I couldn't stand the newspaper night-work. I had a mother and brothers and sisters to keep, as you had. I went back to Horace Milliken and said, "Sir, I've lost my work. I and mine want bread. Will you take me back again?" And he did. He's a kind kind soul is my master.

MISS P. He *is* a kind kind soul.

JOHN. He's good to all the poor. His hand's in his pocket for everybody. Everybody takes advantage of him. His mother-in-lor rides over him. So does his ma. So do I, I may say; but that's over now; and you and I have had our notice to quit, miss, I should say.

MISS P. Yes.

JOHN. I have saved a bit of money—not much—a hundred pound. Miss Prior—Julia—here I am—look—I'm a poor feller—a poor servant—but I've the heart of a man—and—I love you—oh! I love you!

MARY. Oh—ho—ho!

[*Mary has entered from garden, and bursts out crying.*

MISS P. It can't be, John Howell—my dear, brave, kind John Howell. It can't be. I have watched this for some time past, and poor Mary's despair here. (*Kisses Mary, who cries plentifully.*) You have the heart of a true brave man, and must show it and prove it now. I am not—am not of your—pardon me for saying so—of your class in life. I was bred by my uncle, away from my poor parents, though I came back to them after his sudden death; and to poverty, and to this dependent life I am now leading. I am a servant, like you, John, but in another sphere—have to seek another place now; and Heaven knows if I shall procure one, now that that unlucky passage in my life is known. Oh, the coward to recall it! the coward!

MARY. But John whopped him, miss! that he did. He gave it him well, John did. (*Crying.*)

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MISS P. You can't—you ought not to forego an attachment like that, John Howell. A more honest and true-hearted creature never breathed than Mary Barlow.

JOHN. No, indeed.

MISS P. She has loved you since she was a little child. And you loved her once, and do now, John.

MARY. Oh, miss! you hare a hangel,—I hallways said you were a hangel.

MISS P. You are better than I am, my dear—much, much better than I am, John. The curse of my poverty has been that I have had to flatter and to dissemble, and hide the faults of those I wanted to help, and to smile when I was hurt, and laugh when I was sad, and to coax, and to tack, and to bide my time,—not with Mr. Milliken: he is all honour, and kindness, and simplicity. Whom did *he* ever injure, or what unkind word did *he* ever say? But do you think, with the jealousy of those two ladies over his house, I could have stayed here without being a hypocrite to both of them? Go, John. My good dear friend, John Howell, marry Mary. You'll be happier with her than with me. There! There!

[*They embrace.*

MARY. O—o—o! I think I'll go and hiron hout Miss Harabella's frocks now. [*Exit.*

Enter MILLIKEN *with* CLARENCE—*who is explaining things to him.*

CLARENCE. Here they are, I give you my word of honour. Ask 'em, damn 'em!

MILLIKEN. What is this I hear? You, John Howell, have dared to strike a gentleman under my roof! Your master's brother-in-law?

JOHN. Yes, by Jove! and I'd do it again.

MILLIKEN. Are you drunk or mad, Howell?

JOHN. I'm as sober and as sensible as ever I was in my life, sir—I not only struck the master, but I struck the man, who's twice as big, only not quite as big a coward, I think.

MILLIKEN. Hold your scurrilous tongue, sir! My good-nature ruins everybody about me. Make up your accounts. Pack your trunks—and never let me see your face again.

JOHN. Very good, sir.

MILLIKEN. I suppose, Miss Prior, you will also be disposed to—to follow Mr. Howell?

MISS P. To quit you, now you know what has passed? I never supposed it could be otherwise. I deceived you, Mr. Milliken,

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as I kept a secret from you, and must pay the penalty. It is a relief to me: the sword has been hanging over me. I wish I had told your poor wife, as I was often minded to do.

MILLIKEN. Oh, you were minded to do it in Italy, were you?

MISS P. Captain Touchit knew it, sir, all along: and that my motives and, thank God, my life were honourable.

MILLIKEN. Oh, Touchit knew it, did he? and thought it honourable—honourable? Ha! ha! to marry a footman—and keep a public-house? I—I beg your pardon, John Howell—I mean nothing against you, you know. You're an honourable man enough, except that you have been damned insolent to my brother-in-law.

JOHN. Oh, Heaven!

[*Strikes his forehead, and walks away.*

MISS P. You mistake me, sir. What I wished to speak of was the fact which this gentleman has no doubt communicated to you—that I danced on the stage for three months.

MILLIKEN. Oh yes. Oh, damme, yes. I forgot. I wasn't thinking of that.

KICKLEBURY. You see she owns it.

MISS P. We were in the depths of poverty. Our furniture and lodging-house under execution—from which Captain Touchit, when he came to know of our difficulties, nobly afterwards released us. My father was in prison, and wanted shillings for medicine, and I—I went and danced on the stage.

MILLIKEN. Well?

MISS P. And I kept the secret afterwards; knowing that I could never hope as governess to obtain a place after having been a stage-dancer.

MILLIKEN. Of course you couldn't,—it's out of the question; and may I ask, are you going to resume that delightful profession when you enter the married state with Mr. Howell?

MISS P. Poor John! it is not I who am going to—that is, it's Mary, the schoolroom maid.

MILLIKEN. Eternal blazes! Have you turned Mormon, John Howell, and are you going to marry the whole house?

JOHN. I made a hass of myself about Miss Prior. I couldn't help her being l—l—ovely.

KICK. Gad, he proposed to her in my presence.

JOHN. What I proposed to her, Cornet Clarence Kicklebury, was my heart and my honour, and my best, and my everything—and you—you wanted to take advantage of her secret, and you offered her indignities, and you laid a cowardly hand on her—a cowardly hand!—and I struck you, and I'd do it again.

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MILLIKEN. What? Is this true?

[*Turning round very fiercely to K.*

KICK. Gad! Well—I only——

MILLIKEN. You only what? You only insulted a lady under my roof—the friend and nurse of your dead sister—the guardian of my children. You only took advantage of a defenceless girl, and would have extorted your infernal pay out of her fear. You miserable sneak and coward!

KICK. Hallo! Come, come! I say I won't stand this sort of chaff. Dammy, I'll send a friend to you!

MILLIKEN. Go out of that window, sir! March! or I will tell my servant, John Howell, to kick you out, you wretched little scamp! Tell that big brute,—what's-his-name?—Lady Kicklebury's man, to pack this young man's portmanteau and bear's-grease pots; and if ever you enter these doors again, Clarence Kicklebury, by the Heaven that made me!—by your sister who is dead!—I will cane your life out of your bones. Angel in heaven! Shade of my Arabella—to think that your brother in your house should be found to insult the guardian of your children!

JOHN. By jingo, you're a good-plucked one! I knew he was, miss,—I told you he was.

[*Exit, shaking hands with his master and with Miss P., and dancing for joy. Exit Clarence, scared, out of window.*

JOHN (*without*). Bulkeley! pack up the Capting's luggage!

MILLIKEN. How can I ask your pardon, Miss Prior? In my wife's name I ask it—in the name of that angel whose dying-bed you watched and soothed—of the innocent children whom you have faithfully tended since.

MISS P. Ah, sir! it is granted when you speak so to me.

MILLIKEN. Eh, eh—d—don't call me sir!

MISS P. It is for me to ask pardon for hiding what you know now: but if I had told you—you—you never would have taken me into your house—your wife never would.

MILLIKEN. No, no. (*Weeping.*)

MISS P. My dear kind Captain Touchit knows it all. It was by his counsel I acted. He it was who relieved our distress. Ask him whether my conduct was not honourable—ask him whether my life was not devoted to my parents—ask him when—when I am gone.

MILLIKEN. When you are gone, Julia! Why are you going? Why should you go, my love—that is—why need you go, in the devil's name?

MISS P. Because, when your mother—when your mother-in-law

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come to hear that your children's governess has been a dancer on the stage, they will send me away, and you will not have the power to resist them. They ought to send me away, sir; but I have acted honestly by the children and their poor mother, and you'll think of me kindly when—I—am—gone?

MILLIKEN. Julia, my dearest—dear—noble—dar——the devil! here's old Kicklebury.

Enter LADY K., Children, *and* CLARENCE.

LADY K. So, Miss Prior! this is what I hear, is it? A dancer in my house! a serpent in my bosom—poisoning—yes, poisoning those blessed children! occasioning quarrels between my own son and my dearest son-in-law; flirting with the footman! When do you intend to leave, madam, the house which you have po—poll—luted?

MISS P. I need no hard language, Lady Kicklebury: and I will reply to none. I have signified to Mr. Milliken my wish to leave his house.

MILLIKEN. Not, not, if you will stay. (*To Miss P.*)

LADY K. Stay, Horace! she shall *never* stay as governess in this house!

MILLIKEN. Julia! will you stay as mistress? You have known me for a year alone—before, not so well, when the house had a mistress that is gone. You know what my temper is, and that my tastes are simple, and my heart not unkind. I have watched you, and have never seen you out of temper, though you have been tried. I have long thought you good and beautiful, but I never thought to ask the question which I put to you now:—come in, sir! (*to Clarence at door*):—now that you have been persecuted by those who ought to have upheld you, and insulted by those who owed you gratitude and respect. I am tired of their domination, and as weary of a man's cowardly impertinence (*to Clarence*) as of a woman's jealous tyranny. They have made what was my Arabella's home miserable by their oppression and their quarrels. Julia! my wife's friend, my children's friend! be mine, and make me happy! Don't leave me, Julia! say you won't—say you won't—dearest—dearest girl!

MISS P. I won't—leave—you.

GEORGE (*without*). Oh, I say! Arabella, look here: here's papa a-kissing Miss Prior!

LADY K. Horace—Clarence my son! Shade of my Arabella! can you behold this horrible scene, and not shudder in heaven? Bulkeley! Clarence! go for a doctor—go to Doctor Straightwaist

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at the Asylum—Horace Milliken, who has married the descendant of the Kicklebury's of the Conqueror, marry a dancing-girl off the stage! Horace Milliken! do you wish to see me die in convulsions at your feet? I writhe there, I grovel there. Look! look at me on my knees! your own mother-in-law! drive away this fiend!

MILLIKEN. Hem! I ought to thank you, Lady Kicklebury, for it is you that have given her to me.

LADY K. He won't listen! he turns away and kisses her horrible hand. This will never do. Help me up, Clarence; I must go and fetch his mother. Ah, ah! there she is, there she is!

[*Lady K. rus'es out, as the top of a barouche, with Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington and Coachman, is seen over the gate.*

MRS. B. What is this I hear, my son, my son? You are going to marry a—a stage-dancer? you are driving me mad, Horace!

MILLIKEN. Give me my second chance, mother, to be happy. You have had yourself two chances.

MRS. B. Speak to him, Mr. Bonnington.

[*Bonnington makes dumb show.*

LADY K. Implore him, Mr. Bonnington.

MRS. B. Pray, pray for him, Mr. Bonnington, my love—my lost abandoned boy!

LADY K. Oh, my poor dear Mrs. Bonnington!

MRS. B. Oh, my poor dear Lady Kicklebury!

[*They embrace each other.*

LADY K. I have been down on my knees to him, dearest Mrs. Bonnington.

MRS. B. Let us both—both go down on our knees—I *will* (*to her husband*). Edward, I will! (*Both ladies on their knees. Bonnington with outstretched hands behind them.*) Look, unhappy boy! look, Horace! two mothers on their wretched knees before you, imploring you to send away this monster! Speak to him, Mr. Bonnington. Edward! use authority with him, if he will not listen to his mother——

LADY K. To his mothers!

Enter TOUCHIT.

TOUCHIT. What is this comedy going on, ladies and gentlemen? The ladies on their elderly knees—Miss Prior with her hair down her back. Is it tragedy or comedy—is it a rehearsal for a charade, or are we acting for Horace's birthday? or, oh!—I beg your Reverence's pardon—you were perhaps going to a professional duty?

MRS. B. It's *we* who are praying this child, Touchit. This

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child, with whom you used to come home from Westminster when you were boys. You have influence with him; he listens to you. Entreat him to pause in his madness.

TOUCHIT. What madness?

MRS. B. That—that woman—that serpent yonder—that—that dancing-woman, whom you introduced to Arabella Milliken,—ah! and I rue the day:—Horace is going to mum—mum—marry her!

TOUCHIT. Well! I always thought he would. Ever since I saw him and her playing at whist together, when I came down here a month ago, I thought he would do it.

MRS. B. Oh, it's the whist, the whist! Why did I ever play at whist, Edward? My poor Mr. Milliken used to like his rubber.

TOUCHIT. Since he has been a widower——

LADY K. A widower of that angel! [*Points to picture.*

TOUCHIT. Pooh, pooh, angel! You two ladies have never given the poor fellow any peace. You were always quarrelling over him. You took possession of his house, bullied his servants, spoiled his children; you did, Lady Kicklebury.

LADY K. Sir, you are a rude, low, presuming, vulgar man. Clarence! beat this rude man!

TOUCHIT. From what I have heard of your amiable son, he is not in the warlike line, I think. My dear Julia, I am delighted with all my heart that my old friend should have found a woman of sense, good conduct, good temper—a woman who has had many trials, and borne them with great patience—to take charge of him and make him happy. Horace, give me your hand! I knew Miss Prior in great poverty. I am sure she will bear as nobly her present good fortune; for good fortune it is to any woman to become the wife of such a loyal, honest, kindly gentleman as you are!

Enter JOHN.

JOHN. If you please, my Lady—if you please, sir—Bulkeley——

LADY K. What of Bulkeley, sir?

JOHN. He has packed his things, and Cornet Kicklebury's things, my Lady.

MILLIKEN. Let the fellow go.

JOHN. He won't go, sir, till my Lady have paid him his book and wages. Here's the book, sir!

LADY K. Insolence! quit my presence! And I, Mr. Milliken, will quit a house——

JOHN. Shall I call your Ladyship a carriage?

LADY K. Where I have met with rudeness, cruelty, and fiendish (*to Miss P., who smiles and curtsies*)—yes, fiendish ingratitude.

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I will go, I say, as soon as I have made arrangements for taking other lodgings. You cannot expect a lady of fashion to turn out like a servant.

JOHN. Hire the "Star and Garter" for her, sir. Send down to the "Castle"; anything to get rid of her. I'll tell her maid to pack her traps. Pinhorn! [*Beckons maid and gives orders.*

TOUCHIT. You had better go at once, my dear Lady Kicklebury.

LADY K. Sir!

TOUCHIT. *The other mother-in-law is coming!* I met her on the road with all her family. He! he! he! (*Screams.*)

Enter MRS. PRIOR *and* Children.

MRS. P. My Lady; I hope your Ladyship is quite well! Dear kind Mrs. Bonnington! I came to pay my duty to you, ma'am. This is Charlotte, my Lady—the great girl whom your Ladyship so kindly promised the gown for; and this is my little girl, Mrs. Bonnington, ma'am, please; and this is my Bluecoat boy. Go and speak to dear kind Mr. Milliken—our best friend and protector—the son and son-in-law of these dear ladies. Look, sir! He has brought his copy to show you. (*Boy shows copy.*) Ain't it creditable to a boy of his age, Captain Touchit? And my best and most grateful services to you, sir. Julia, Julia, my dear, where's your cap and spectacles, you stupid thing? You've let your hair drop down. What! what!—— (*Begins to be puzzled.*)

MRS. B. Is this collusion, madam?

MRS. P. Collusion, dear Mrs. Bonnington!

LADY K. Or insolence, Mrs. Prior?

MRS. P. Insolence, your Ladyship! What—what is it? what has happened? What's Julia's hair down for? Ah! you've not sent the poor girl away? the poor poor child, and the poor poor children!

TOUCHIT. That dancing at the "Coburg" has come out, Mrs. Prior.

MRS. P. Not the darling's fault. It was to help her poor father in prison. It was I who forced her to do it. Oh! don't, don't, dear Lady Kicklebury, take the bread out of the mouths of these poor orphans! (*Crying.*)

MILLIKEN. Enough of this, Mrs. Prior: your daughter is not going away. Julia has promised to stay with me—and—never to leave me—as governess no longer, but as wife to me.

MRS. P. Is it—is it true, Julia?

MISS P. Yes, mamma.

MRS. P. Oh! oh! oh! (*Flings down her umbrella, kisses*

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Julia, and running to Milliken), My son, my son! Come here, children. Come, Adolphus, Amelia, Charlotte—kiss your dear brother, children. What, my dears! How do you do, dears? (*To Milliken's children.*) Have they heard the news? And do you know that my daughter is going to be your mamma? There—there—go and play with your little uncles and aunts, that's good children! (*She motions off the Children, who retire towards garden. Her manner changes to one of great patronage and intense satisfaction.*) Most hot weather, your Ladyship, I'm sure. Mr. Bonnington, you must find it hot weather for preachin'! Lor'! there's that little wretch beatin' Adolphus! George, sir! have done, sir! (*Runs to separate them.*) How ever shall we make those children agree, Julia?

MISS P. They have been a little spoiled, and I think Mr. Milliken will send George and Arabella to school, mamma: will you not, Horace?

MR. MILLIKEN. I think school will be the very best thing for them.

MRS. P. And (*Mrs. P. whispers, pointing to her own children*) the blue room, the green room, the rooms old Lady Kick has—plenty of room for us, my dear!

MISS P. No, mamma, I think it will be too large a party,—Mr. Milliken has often said that he would like to go abroad, and I hope that now he will be able to make his tour.

MRS. P. Oh, then! we can live in the house, you know: what's the use of payin' lodgin', my dear?

MISS P. The house is going to be painted. You had best live in your own house, mamma; and if you want anything, Horace, Mr. Milliken, I am sure, will make it comfortable for you. He has had too many visitors of late, and will like a more quiet life, I think. Will you not?

MILLIKEN. I shall like a life with *you*, Julia.

JOHN. Cab, sir, for her Ladyship!

LADY K. This instant let me go! Call my people. Clarence, your arm! Bulkeley, Pinhorn! Mrs. Bonnington, I wish you good morning! Arabella, angel! (*looks at picture*) I leave you. I shall come to you ere long.

(*Exit, refusing Milliken's hand, passes up garden, with her servants following her. Mary and other servants of the house are collected together, whom Lady K. waves off. Bluecoat boy on wall eating plums. Page, as she goes, cries, Hurray, hurray! Bluecoat boy cries, Hurray! When Lady K. is gone, John advances.*

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JOHN. I think I heard you say, sir, that it was your intention to go abroad?

MILLIKEN. Yes; oh yes! Are we going abroad, my Julia?

MISS P. To settle matters, to have the house painted, and clear. (*Pointing to Children, Mother, &c.*) Don't you think it is the best thing that we can do?

MILLIKEN. Surely, surely: we are going abroad. Howell, you will come with us of course, and with your experience you will make a capital courier. Won't Howell make a capital courier, Julia? Good honest fellow, John Howell. Beg your pardon for being so rude to you just now. But my temper is very hot, very!

JOHN (*laughing*). You are a Tartar, sir. Such a tyrant! isn't he, ma'am?

MISS P. Well, no; I don't think you have a very bad temper, Mr. Milliken, a—Horace.

JOHN. You must—take care of him—alone, Miss Prior—Julia—I mean Mrs. Milliken. Man and boy I've waited on him this fifteen year: with the exception of that trial at the printing-office, which—which I won't talk of *now*, madam. I never knew him angry; though many a time I have known him provoked. I never knew him say a hard word, though sometimes perhaps we've deserved it. Not often—such a good master as that is pretty sure of getting a good servant—that is, if a man has a heart in his bosom; and these things are found both in and out of livery. Yes, I have been a honest servant to him,—haven't I, Mr. Milliken?

MILLIKEN. Indeed, yes, John.

JOHN. And so has Mary Barlow. Mary, my dear! (*Mary comes forward.*) Will you allow me to introduce you, sir, to the futur' Mrs. Howell?—if Mr. Bonnington does *your* little business for you, as I daresay (*turning to Mr. B.*), hold gov'nor, you will!—Make it up with your poor son, Mrs. Bonnington, ma'am. You have took a second 'elpmate, why shouldn't Master Horace? (*To Mrs. B.*) He—he wants somebody to help him, and take care of him, more than you do.

TOUCHIT. You never spoke a truer word in your life, Howell.

JOHN. It's my general 'abit, Capting, to indulge in them sort of statements. A true friend I have been to my master, and a true friend I'll remain when he's my master no more.

MILLIKEN. Why, John, you are not going to leave me?

JOHN. It's best, sir, I should go. I—I'm not fit to be a servant in this house any longer. I wish to sit in my own little home, with my own little wife by my side. Poor dear! you've no conversation, Mary, but you're a good little soul. We've saved a hundred pound apiece, and if we want more, I know who won't

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grudge it us, a good feller—a good master—for whom I've saved many a hundred pound myself, and will take the "Milliken Arms" at old Pigeoncot—and once a year or so, at this hanniversary, we will pay our respects to you, sir, and madam. Perhaps we will bring some children with us, perhaps we will find some more in this villa. Bless 'em beforehand! Good-bye, sir, and madam—come away, Mary! [*Going.*

MRS. P. (*entering with clothes, &c.*) She has not left a single thing in her room. Amelia, come here! this cloak will do capital for you, and this—this garment is the very thing for Adolphus. Oh, John! eh, Howell! will you please to see that my children have something to eat, immediately! The Milliken children, I suppose, have dined already?

JOHN. Yes, ma'am: certainly, ma'am.

MRS. P. I see he is inclined to be civil to me *now!*

MISS P. John Howell is about to leave us, mamma. He is engaged to Mary Barlow, and when we go away, he is going to set up housekeeping for himself. Good-bye, and thank you, John Howell (*gives her hand to John, but with great reserve of manner*). You have been a kind and true friend to us—if ever we can serve you, count upon us—may he not, Mr. Milliken?

MILLIKEN. Always, always.

MISS P. But you will still wait upon us—upon Mr. Milliken, for a day or two, won't you, John? until we—until Mr. Milliken has found some one to replace you. He will never find any one more honest than you, and good kind little Mary. Thank you, Mary, for your goodness to the poor governess.

MARY. Oh, miss! oh, mum!

[*Miss P. kisses Mary patronisingly.*

MISS P. (*to John*). And after they have had some refreshment, get a cab for my brothers and sisters, if you please, John. Don't you think that will be best, my—my dear?

MILLIKEN. Of course, of course, dear Julia!

MISS P. And, Captain Touchit, you will stay, I hope, and dine with Mr. Milliken? And, Mrs. Bonnington, if you will receive as a daughter one who has always had a sincere regard for you, I think you will aid in making your son happy, as I promise you with all my heart and all my life to endeavour to do.

[*Miss P. and M. go up to Mrs. Bonnington.*

MRS. BONNINGTON. Well, there then, since it must be so, bless you, my children!

TOUCHIT. Spoken like a sensible woman! And now, as I do not wish to interrupt this felicity, I will go and dine at the "Star and Garter."

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MISS P. My dear Captain Touchit, not for worlds! Don't you know I mustn't be alone with Mr. Milliken until—until——?

MILLIKEN. Until I am made the happiest man alive! And you will come down and see us often, Touchit, won't you? And we hope to see our friends here often. And we will have a little life and spirit and gaiety in the place. Oh, mother! oh, George! oh, Julia! what a comfort it is to me to think that I am released from the tyranny of that terrible mother-in-law!

MRS. PRIOR. Come in to your teas, children. Come this moment, I say.

[*The Children pass, quarrelling, behind the characters, Mrs. Prior summoning them; John and Mary standing on each side of the dining-room door as the curtain falls.*

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LOVEL THE WIDOWER

CHAPTER I

THE BACHELOR OF BEAK STREET

WHO shall be the hero of this tale? Not I who write it. I am but the Chorus of the Play. I make remarks on the conduct of the characters: I narrate their simple story. There is love and marriage in it: there is grief and disappointment: the scene is in the parlour, and the region beneath the parlour. No: it may be the parlour and kitchen, in this instance, are on the same level. There is no high life, unless, to be sure, you call a baronet's widow a lady in high life; and some ladies may be, while some certainly are not. I don't think there's a villain in the whole performance. There is an abominable selfish old woman, certainly; an old highway robber; an old sponger on other people's kindness; an old haunter of Bath and Cheltenham boarding-houses (about which how can I know anything, never having been in a boarding-house at Bath or Cheltenham in my life?); an old swindler of tradesmen, tyrant of servants, bully of the poor—who, to be sure, might do duty for a villain, but she considers herself as virtuous a woman as ever was born. The heroine is not faultless (ah! that will be a great relief to some folk, for many writers' good women are, you know, so *very* insipid). The principal personage you may very likely think to be no better than a muff. But is many a respectable man of our acquaintance much better? and do muffs know that they are what they are, or, knowing it, are they unhappy? Do girls decline to marry one if he is rich? do we refuse to dine with one? I listened to one at church last Sunday, with all the women crying and sobbing; and, oh, dear me! how finely he preached! Don't we give him great credit for wisdom and eloquence in the House of Commons? Don't we give him important commands in the army? Can you, or can you not, point out one who has been made a peer? Doesn't your wife call

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one in the moment any of the children are ill? Don't we read his dear poems, or even novels? Yes; perhaps even this one is read and written by—Well! *Quid rides?* Do you mean that I am painting a portrait which hangs before me every morning in the looking-glass when I am shaving? *Après!* Do you suppose that I suppose that I have not infirmities like my neighbours? Am I weak? It is notorious to all my friends there is a certain dish I can't resist: no, not if I have already eaten twice too much at dinner. So, dear sir, or madam, have *you* your weakness—*your* irresistible dish of temptation? (or if you don't know it, your friends do). No, dear friend, the chances are that you and I are not people of the highest intellect, of the largest fortune, of the most ancient family, of the most consummate virtue, of the most faultless beauty in face and figure. We are no heroes nor angels; neither are we fiends from abodes unmentionable, black assassins, treacherous Iagos, familiar with stabbing and poison—murder our amusement, daggers our playthings, arsenic our daily bread, lies our conversation, and forgery our common handwriting. No, we are not monsters of crime, or angels walking the earth—at least I know *one* of us who isn't, as can be shown any day at home if the knife won't cut or the mutton comes up raw. But we are not altogether brutal and unkind, and a few folks like us. Our poetry is not as good as Alfred Tennyson's, but we can turn a couplet for Miss Fanny's album: our jokes are not always first-rate, but Mary and her mother smile very kindly when papa tells his story or makes his pun. We have many weaknesses, but we are not ruffians of crime. No more was my friend Lovel. On the contrary, he was as harmless and kindly a fellow as ever lived when I first knew him. At present, with his changed position, he is, perhaps, rather *fine* (and certainly I am not asked to his *best* dinner-parties as I used to be, where you hardly see a commoner—but stay! I am advancing matters). At the time when this story begins, I say, Lovel had his faults—which of us has not? He had buried his wife, having notoriously been henpecked by her. How many men and brethren are like him! He had a good fortune—I wish I had as much—though I daresay many people are ten times as rich. He was a good-looking fellow enough; though that depends, ladies, upon whether you like a fair man or a dark one. He had a country house, but it was only at Putney. In fact, he was in business in the City, and being an hospitable man, and having three or four spare bedrooms, some of his friends were always welcome at Shrublands, especially after Mrs. Lovel's death, who liked me pretty well at the period of her early marriage with my friend, but got to dislike me at last and to show me the cold shoulder. That is a joint

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I never could like (though I have known fellows who persist in dining off it year after year, who cling hold of it, and refuse to be separated from it). I say, when Lovel's wife began to show me that she was tired of my company, I made myself scarce: used to pretend to be engaged when Fred faintly asked me to Shrublands; to accept his meek apologies, proposals to dine *en garçon* at Greenwich, the club, and so forth; and never visit upon him my wrath at his wife's indifference—for, after all, he had been my friend at many a pinch: he never stinted at "Hart's" or "Lovegrove's," and always made a point of having the wine I liked, never mind what the price was. As for his wife, there was, assuredly, no love lost between us—I thought her a lean, scraggy, lackadaisical, egotistical, consequential, insipid creature; and as for his mother-in-law, who stayed at Fred's as long and as often as her daughter would endure her, has any one who ever knew that notorious old Lady Baker at Bath, at Cheltenham, at Brighton,—wherever trumps and frumps were found together; wherever scandal was cackled; wherever fly-blown reputations were assembled, and dowagers with damaged titles trod over each other for the *pas*;—who, I say, ever had a good word for that old woman? What party was not bored where she appeared? What tradesman was not done with whom she dealt? I wish with all my heart I was about to narrate a story with a good mother-in-law for a character; but then, you know, my dear madam, all good women in novels are insipid. This woman certainly was not. She was not only not insipid, but exceedingly bad-tasted. She had a foul loud tongue, a stupid head, a bad temper, an immense pride and arrogance, an extravagant son, and very little money. Can I say much more of a woman than this? Aha! my good Lady Baker! I was a *mauvais sujet*, was I?—I was leading Fred into smoking, drinking, and low bachelor habits, was I? I, his old friend, who have borrowed money from him any time these twenty years, was not fit company for you and your precious daughter? Indeed! *I* paid the money I borrowed from him like a man; but did *you* ever pay him, I should like to know? When Mrs. Lovel was in the first column of the *Times*, *then* Fred and I used to go off to Greenwich and Blackwall, as I said; then his kind old heart was allowed to feel for his friend; *then* we could have the other bottle of claret without the appearance of Bedford and the coffee, which in Mrs. L.'s time used to be sent in to us before we could ring for a second bottle, although she and Lady Baker had had three glasses each out of the first. Three full glasses each, I give you my word! No, madam, it was your turn to bully me once—now it is mine and I use it. No, you old catamaran, though you pretend you never read novels, some of

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your confounded good-natured friends will let you know of *this* one. Here you are, do you hear? Here you shall be shown up. And so I intend to show up *other* women and *other* men who have offended me. Is one to be subject to slights and scorn, and not have revenge? Kindnesses are easily forgotten; but injuries!—what worthy man does not keep *those* in mind?

Before entering upon the present narrative, may I take leave to inform a candid public that, though it is all true, there is not a word of truth in it; that though Lovel is alive and prosperous, and you very likely have met him, yet I defy you to point him out; that his wife (for he is Lovel the Widower no more) is not the lady you imagine her to be, when you say (as you will persist in doing), "Oh, that character is intended for Mrs. Thingamy, or was notoriously drawn from Lady So-and-So." No. You are utterly mistaken. Why, even the advertising puffers have almost given up that stale stratagem of announcing "REVELATIONS FROM HIGH LIFE. —The *beau monde* will be startled at recognising the portraits of some of its brilliant leaders in Miss Wiggins's forthcoming *roman de société*." Or, "We suspect a certain ducal house will be puzzled to guess how the pitiless author of 'Mayfair Mysteries' has become acquainted with (and exposed with a fearless hand) *certain family secrets* which were thought only to be known to a few of the very highest members of the aristocracy." No, I say; these silly baits to catch an unsuspecting public shall not be our arts. If you choose to occupy yourself with trying to ascertain if a certain cap fits one amongst ever so many thousand heads, you *may* possibly pop it on the right one: but the cap-maker will perish before he tells you; unless, of course, he has some private pique to avenge, or malice to wreak, upon some individual who can't by any possibility hit again;—*then*, indeed, he will come boldly forward and seize upon his victim—(a bishop, say, or a woman without coarse quarrelsome male relatives, will be best)—and clap on him, or her, such a cap, with such ears, that all the world shall laugh at the poor wretch, shuddering and blushing beetroot red, and whimpering deserved tears of rage and vexation at being made the common butt of society. Besides, I dine at Lovel's still; his company and cuisine are amongst the best in London. If they suspected I was taking them off, he and his wife would leave off inviting me. Would any man of a generous disposition lose such a valued friend for a joke, or be so foolish as to show him up in a story? All persons with a decent knowledge of the world will at once banish the thought, as not merely base, but absurd. I am invited to his house one day next week: *vous concevez* I can't mention the very day, for then he would find me out—and of course there would be no more cards

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for his old friend. He would not like appearing, as it must be owned he does in this memoir, as a man of not very strong mind. He believes himself to be a most determined, resolute person. He is quick in speech, wears a fierce beard, speaks with asperity to his servants (who liken him to a—to that before-named sable or ermine contrivance, in which ladies insert their hands in winter), and takes his wife to task so smartly, that I believe she believes he believes he is the master of the house. "Elizabeth, my love, he must mean A, or B, or D," I fancy I hear Lovel say; and she says, "Yes; oh! it is certainly D—his very image!" "D to a T," says Lovel (who is a neat wit). *She* may know that I mean to depict her husband in the above unpretending lines: but she will never let me know of her knowledge except by a little extra courtesy; except (may I make this pleasing exception?) by a few more invitations; except by a look of those unfathomable eyes (gracious goodness! to think she wore spectacles ever so long, and put a lid over them as it were!), into which, when you gaze sometimes, you may gaze so deep, and deep, and deep, that I defy you to plump half-way down into their mystery.

When I was a young man, I had lodgings in Beak Street, Regent Street (I no more have lived in Beak Street than in Belgrave Square: but I choose to say so, and no gentleman will be so rude as to contradict another)—I had lodgings, I say, in Beak Street, Regent Street. Mrs. Prior was the landlady's name. She had seen better days—landladies frequently have. Her husband—he could not be called the landlord, for Mrs. P. was manager of the place—had been, in happier times, captain or lieutenant in the militia; then of Diss, in Norfolk, of no profession; then of Norwich Castle, a prisoner for debt; then of Southampton Buildings, London, law-writer; then of the Bom-Retiro Caçadores, in the service of H.M. the Queen of Portugal, lieutenant and paymaster; then of Melina Place, Saint George's Fields, &c.—I forbear to give the particulars of an existence which a legal biographer has traced step by step, and which has more than once been the subject of judicial investigation by certain commissioners in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Well, Prior, at this time, swimming out of a hundred shipwrecks, had clambered on to a lighter, as it were, and was clerk to a coal-merchant, by the river-side. "You conceive, sir," he would say, "my employment is only temporary—the fortune of war, the fortune of war!" He smattered words in not a few foreign languages. His person was profusely scented with tobacco. Bearded individuals, padding the muddy hoof in the neighbouring Regent Street, would call sometimes of an evening, and ask for "the Captain." He was known at many neighbouring billiard-tables, and, I imagine, not

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respected. You will not see enough of Captain Prior to be very weary of him and his coarse swagger, to be disgusted by his repeated requests for small money-loans, or to deplore his loss, which you will please to suppose has happened before the curtain of our present drama draws up. I think two people in the world were sorry for him: his wife, who still loved the memory of the handsome young man who had wooed and won her; his daughter Elizabeth, whom for the last few months of his life, and up to his fatal illness, he every evening conducted to what he called her "Academy." You are right. Elizabeth is the principal character in this story. When I knew her, a thin freckled girl of fifteen, with a lean frock, and hair of a reddish hue, she used to borrow my books, and play on the First Floor's piano, when he was from home—Slumley his name was. He was editor of the *Swell*, a newspaper then published; author of a great number of popular songs, a friend of several music-selling houses; and it was by Mr. Slumley's interest that Elizabeth was received as a pupil at what the family called "the Academy."

Captain Prior then used to conduct his girl to the Academy, but she often had to conduct him home again. Having to wait about the premises for two, or three, or five hours sometimes, whilst Elizabeth was doing her lessons, he would naturally desire to shelter himself from the cold at some neighbouring house of entertainment. Every Friday, a prize of a golden medal, nay, I believe sometimes of twenty-five silver medals, was awarded to Miss Bellenden and other young ladies for their good conduct and assiduity at this Academy. Miss Bellenden gave her gold medal to her mother, only keeping five shillings for herself, with which the poor child bought gloves, shoes, and her humble articles of millinery.

Once or twice the Captain succeeded in intercepting that piece of gold, and I daresay treated some of his whiskered friends, the clinking trampers of the Quadrant pavement. He was a free-handed fellow when he had anybody's money in his pocket. It was owing to differences regarding the settlement of accounts that he quarrelled with the coal-merchant, his very last employer. Bessy, after yielding once or twice to his importunity, and trying to believe his solemn promises of repayment, had strength of mind to refuse her father the pound which he would have taken. Her five shillings—her poor little slender pocket-money, the representative of her charities and kindnesses to the little brothers and sisters, of her little toilette ornaments, nay necessities; of those well-mended gloves, of those oft-darned stockings, of those poor boots, which had to walk many a weary mile after midnight; of those

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little knicknacks, in the shape of brooch or bracelet, with which the poor child adorned her homely robe or sleeve—her poor five shillings, out of which Mary sometimes found a pair of shoes, or Tommy a flannel-jacket, and little Bill a coach and horse—this wretched sum, this mite, which Bessy administered amongst so many poor—I very much fear her father sometimes confiscated. I charged the child with the fact, and she could not deny me. I vowed a tremendous vow, that if ever I heard of her giving Prior money again, I would quit the lodgings, and never give those children lollipop, nor pegtop, nor sixpence; nor the pungent marmalade, nor the biting gingerbread-nut, nor the theatre characters, nor the paint-box to illuminate the same; nor the discarded clothes, which became smaller clothes upon the persons of little Tommy and little Bill, for whom Mrs. Prior, and Bessy, and the little maid, cut, clipped, altered, ironed, darned, mangled, with the greatest ingenuity. I say, considering what had passed between me and the Priors—considering those money transactions, and those clothes, and my kindness to the children—it was rather hard that my jam-pots were poached, and my brandy-bottles leaked. And then to frighten her brother with the story of the inexorable creditor—oh, Mrs. Prior!—oh, fie, Mrs. P.!

So Bessy went to her school in a shabby shawl, a faded bonnet, and a poor little lean dress flounced with the mud and dust of all weathers, whereas there were some other young ladies, fellow-pupils of hers, who laid out their gold medals to much greater advantage. Miss Delamere, with her eighteen shillings a week (calling them "*silver medals*" was only my wit you see), had twenty new bonnets, silk and satin dresses for all seasons, feathers in abundance, swansdown muffs and tippets, lovely pocket-handkerchiefs and trinkets, and many and many a half-crown mould of jelly, bottle of sherry, blanket, or what not, for a poor fellow-pupil in distress; and as for Miss Montanville, who had exactly the same sal—well, who had a scholarship of exactly the same value, viz., about fifty pounds yearly—she kept an elegant little cottage in the Regent's Park, a brougham with a horse all over brass harness, and a groom with a prodigious gold lace hat-band, who was treated with frightful contumely at the neighbouring cabstand; an aunt or a mother, I don't know which (I hope it was only an aunt), always comfortably dressed, and who looked after Montanville; and she herself had bracelets, brooches, and velvet pelisses of the very richest description. But then Miss Montanville was a good economist. *She* was never known to help a poor friend in distress, or give a fainting brother and sister a crust or a glass of wine. She allowed ten shillings a week to her father, whose name was Boskinson, said to

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be a clerk to a chapel in Paddington; but she would never see him, —no, not when he was in hospital, where he was so ill; and though she certainly lent Miss Wilder thirteen pounds, she had Wilder arrested upon her promissory note for twenty-four, and sold up every stick of Wilder's furniture, so that the whole Academy cried shame! Well, an accident occurred to Miss Montanville, for which those may be sorry who choose. On the evening of the 26th of December, eighteen hundred and something, when the conductors of the Academy were giving their grand Annual Christmas Pant—I should say examination of the Academy pupils before their numerous friends—Montanville, who happened to be present, not in her brougham this time, but in an aërial chariot of splendour drawn by doves, fell off a rainbow, and through the roof of the Revolving Shrine of the Amaranthine Queen, thereby very nearly damaging Bellenden, who was occupying the shrine attired in a light-blue spangled dress, waving a wand, and uttering some idiotic verses composed for her by the Professor of Literature attached to the Academy. As for Montanville, let her go shrieking down that trap-door, break her leg, be taken home, and never more be character of ours. She never could speak. Her voice was as hoarse as a fishwoman's. Can that immense stout old box-keeper at the —— Theatre, who limps up to ladies on the first tier, and offers that horrible footstool, which everybody stumbles over, and makes a clumsy curtsey, and looks so knowing and hard, as if she recognised an acquaintance in the splendid lady who enters the box—can that old female be the once brilliant Emily Montanville? I am told there are *no* lady box-keepers in the English theatres. This, I submit, is a proof of my consummate care and artifice in rescuing from a prurient curiosity the individual personages from whom the characters of the present story are taken. Montanville is *not* a box-opener. She *may*, under another name, keep a trinket-shop in the Burlington Arcade, for what you know: but this secret no torture shall induce me to divulge. Life has its rises and its downfalls, and you have had yours, you hobbling old creature. Montanville, indeed! Go thy ways! Here is a shilling for thee. (Thank you, sir.) Take away that confounded footstool, and never let us see thee more!

Now the fairy Amarantha was like a certain dear young lady of whom we have read in early youth. Up to twelve o'clock, attired in sparkling raiment, she leads the dance with the prince (Gradini, known as Grady in his days of banishment at the T. R. Dublin). At supper, she takes her place by the prince's royal father (who is alive now, and still reigns occasionally, so that we will not mention his revered name). She makes believe to drink

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from the gilded pasteboard, and to eat of the mighty pudding. She smiles as the good old irascible monarch knocks the prime minister and the cooks about: she blazes in splendour: she beams with a thousand jewels, in comparison with which the Koh-i-noor is a wretched lustreless little pebble: she disappears in a chariot, such as a Lord Mayor never rode in:—and at midnight, who is that young woman tripping homeward through the wet streets in a battered bonnet, a cotton shawl, and a lean frock fringed with the dreary winter flounces?

Our Cinderella is up early in the morning: she does no little portion of the house-work: she dresses her sisters and brothers: she prepares papa's breakfast. On days when she has not to go to morning lessons at her Academy, she helps with the dinner. Heaven help us! She has often brought mine when I have dined at home, and owns to having made that famous mutton-broth when I had a cold. Foreigners come to the house—professional gentlemen—to see Slumley on the first floor: exiled captains of Spain and Portugal, companions of the warrior her father. It is surprising how she has learned their accents, and has picked up French, and Italian too. And she played the piano in Mr. Slumley's room sometimes, as I have said; but refrained from that presently, and from visiting him altogether. I suspect he was not a man of principle. His paper used to make direful attacks upon individual reputations; and you would find theatre and opera people most curiously praised and assaulted in the *Swell*. I recollect meeting him, several years after, in the lobby of the Opera, in a very noisy frame of mind, when he heard a certain lady's carriage called, and cried out with exceeding strong language, which need not be accurately reported, "Look at that woman! Confound her! I made her, sir! Got her an engagement when the family was starving, sir! Did you see her, sir? She wouldn't even look at me!" Nor indeed was Mr. S. at that moment a very agreeable object to behold.

Then I remembered that there had been some quarrel with this man, when we lodged in Beak Street together. If difficulty there was, it was solved *ambulando*. He quitted the lodgings, leaving an excellent and costly piano as security for a heavy bill which he owed to Mrs. Prior, and the instrument was presently fetched away by the music-sellers, its owners. But regarding Mr. S——'s valuable biography, let us speak very gently. You see it is "an insult to literature" to say that there are disreputable and dishonest persons who write in newspapers.

Nothing, dear friend, escapes your penetration: if a joke is made in your company, you are down upon it instanter, and your smile rewards the wag who amuses you: so you knew at once,

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whilst I was talking of Elizabeth and her Academy, that a theatre was meant, where the poor child danced for a guinea or five-and-twenty shillings per week. Nay, she must have had not a little skill and merit to advance to the quarter of a hundred; for she was not pretty at this time, only a rough tawny-haired filly of a girl, with great eyes. Dolphin, the manager, did not think much of her, and she passed before him in his regiment of Sea-nymphs, or Bayadères, or Fairies, or Mazurka maidens (with their fluttering lances and little scarlet slyboots!) scarcely more noticed than Private Jones standing under arms in his company when his Royal Highness the Field-Marshal gallops by. There were no dramatic triumphs for Miss Bellenden: no bouquets were flung at her feet: no cunning Mephistopheles—the emissary of some philandering Faustus outside—corrupted her duenna, or brought her caskets of diamonds. Had there been any such admirer for Bellenden, Dolphin would not only not have been shocked, but he would very likely have raised her salary. As it was, though himself, I fear, a person of loose morals, he respected better things. "That Bellenden's a good hhonest gurl," he said to the present writer: "works hard: gives her money to her family: father a shy old cove. Very good family I hear they are!" and he passes on to some other of the innumerable subjects which engage a manager.

Now, why should a poor lodging-house keeper make such a mighty secret of having a daughter earning an honest guinea by dancing at a theatre? Why persist in calling the theatre an Academy? Why did Mrs. Prior speak of it as such, to me who knew what the truth was, and to whom Elizabeth herself made no mystery of her calling?

There are actions and events in its life over which decent Poverty often chooses to cast a veil that is not unbecoming to wear. We can all, if we are minded, peer through this poor flimsy screen: often there is no shame behind it:—only empty platters, poor scraps, and other threadbare evidence of want and cold. And who is called on to show his rags to the public, and cry out his hunger in the street? At this time (her character has developed itself not so amiably since), Mrs. Prior was outwardly respectable; and yet, as I have said, my groceries were consumed with remarkable rapidity; my wine and brandy-bottles were all leaky, until they were excluded from air under a patent lock;—my Morel's raspberry-jam, of which I was passionately fond, if exposed on the table for a few hours, was always eaten by the cat, or that wonderful little wretch of a maid-of-all-work, so active, yet so patient, so kind, so dirty, so obliging. Was it *the maid* who took those groceries? I have seen the "Gazza Ladra," and

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know that poor little maids are sometimes wrongfully accused; and besides, in my particular case, I own I don't care who the culprit was. At the year's end, a single man is not much poorer for this house-tax which he pays. One Sunday evening, being confined with a cold, and partaking of that mutton-broth which Elizabeth made so well, and which she brought me, I entreated her to bring from the cupboard, of which I gave her the key, a certain brandy-bottle. She saw my face when I looked at her: there was no mistaking its agony. There was scarce any brandy left: it had all leaked away: and it was Sunday, and no good brandy was to be bought that evening.

Elizabeth, I say, saw my grief. She put down the bottle, and she cried: she tried to prevent herself from doing so at first, but she fairly burst into tears.

"My dear,—dear child," says I, seizing her hand, "you don't suppose I fancy you——"

"No—no!" she says, drawing the large hand over her eyes. "No—no! but I saw it when you and Mr. Warrington last 'ad some. Oh! do have a patting lock!"

"A patent lock, my dear!" I remarked. "How odd that you, who have learned to pronounce Italian and French words so well, should make such strange slips in English! Your mother speaks well enough."

"She was born a lady. She was not sent to be a milliner's girl, as I was, and then among those noisy girls at that—oh! that *place!*" cries Bessy, in a sort of desperation, clenching her hand.

Here the bells of Saint Beak's began to ring quite cheerily for evening service. I heard "Elizabeth!" cried out from the lower regions by Mrs. Prior's cracked voice. And the maiden went her way to church, which she and her mother never missed of a Sunday; and I daresay I slept just as well without the brandy-and-water.

Slumley being gone, Mrs. Prior came to me rather wistfully one day, and wanted to know whether I would object to Madame Bentivoglio, the opera-singer, having the first floor? This was too much, indeed! How was my work to go on with that woman practising all day and roaring underneath me? But, after sending away so good a customer, I could not refuse to lend the Priors a little more money; and Prior insisted upon treating me to a new stamp, and making out a new and handsome bill for an amount nearly twice as great as the last: which he had no doubt under Heaven, and which he pledged his honour as an officer and a gentleman, that he would meet. Let me see: That was how many years ago?—Thirteen, fourteen, twenty? Never mind. My

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fair Elizabeth, I think if you saw your poor old father's signature now, you would pay it. I came upon it lately in an old box I haven't opened these fifteen years, along with some letters, written —never mind by whom—and an old glove that I used to set an absurd value by; and that emerald-green tabinet waistcoat which kind old Mrs. Macmanus gave me, and which I wore at the L—d L—t—nt's ball, Ph–n–x Park, Dublin, once, when I danced with *her* there! Lord!—Lord! It would no more meet round my waist now than round Daniel Lambert's. How we outgrow things!

But as I never presented this united bill of £43 odd (the first portion of £23, &c. was advanced by me in order to pay an execution out of the house)—as I never expected to have it paid any more than I did to be Lord Mayor of London,—I say it was a little hard that Mrs. Prior should write off to her brother (she writes a capital letter), blessing Providence that had given him a noble income, promising him the benefit of her prayers, in order that he should long live to enjoy his large salary, and informing him that an obdurate creditor, who shall be nameless (meaning me), who had Captain Prior *in his power* (as if, being in possession of that dingy scrawl, I should have known what to do with it), who held Mr. Prior's acceptance for £43, 14s. 4d. due on the 3rd July (my bill), would infallibly bring their family to RUIN, unless a part of the money was paid up. When I went up to my old College, and called on Sargent, at Boniface Lodge, he treated me as civilly as if I had been an undergraduate; scarcely spoke to me in hall, where, of course, I dined at the Fellows' table; and only asked me to one of Mrs. Sargent's confounded tea-parties during the whole time of my stay. Now it was by this man's entreaty that I went to lodge at Prior's; he talked to me after dinner one day, he hummed, he ha'd, he blushed, he prated in his pompous way, about an unfortunate sister in London—fatal early marriage—husband, Captain Prior, Knight of the Swan with Two Necks of Portugal, most distinguished officer, but imprudent speculator—advantageous lodgings in the centre of London, quiet, though near the Clubs—if I was ill (I am a confirmed invalid), Mrs. Prior, his sister, would nurse me like a mother. So, in a word, I went to Prior's: I took the rooms: I was attracted by some children: Amelia Jane (that little dirty maid before mentioned) dragging a go-cart, containing a little dirty pair; another marching by them, carrying a fourth well-nigh as big as himself. These little folks, having threaded the mighty flood of Regent Street, debouched into the quiet creek of Beak Street, just as I happened to follow them. And the door at which the small caravan halted,—the very door I

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was in search of,—was opened by Elizabeth, then only just emerging from childhood, with tawny hair falling into her solemn eyes.

The aspect of these little people, which would have deterred many, happened to attract me. I am a lonely man. I may have been ill-treated by some one once, but that is neither here nor there. If I had had children of my own, I think I should have been good to them. I thought Prior a dreadful vulgar wretch, and his wife a scheming, greedy little woman. But the children amused me: and I took the rooms, liking to hear overhead in the morning the patter of their little feet. The person I mean has several;—husband, judge in the West Indies. *Allons!* now you know how I came to live at Mrs. Prior's.

Though I am now a steady, a *confirmed* old bachelor (I shall call myself Mr. Batchelor, if you please, in this story; and there is some one far—far away who knows why I will NEVER take another title), I was a gay young fellow enough once. I was not above the pleasures of youth: in fact, I learned quadrilles on purpose to dance with her that long vacation when I went to read with my young friend, Lord Viscount Poldoody, at Dub—psha! Be still, thou foolish heart! Perhaps I misspent my time as an undergraduate. Perhaps I read too many novels, occupied myself too much with "elegant literature" (that used to be our phrase), and spoke too often at the Union, where I had a considerable reputation. But those fine words got me no College prizes: I missed my fellowship: was rather in disgrace with my relations afterwards, but had a small independence of my own, which I eked out by taking a few pupils for little-goes and the common degree. At length, a relation dying, and leaving me a further small income, I left the University, and came to reside in London.

Now in my third year at College, there came to Saint Boniface a young gentleman, who was one of the few gentlemen-pensioners of our society. His popularity speedily was great. A kindly and simple youth, he would have been liked, I daresay, even though he had been no richer than the rest of us; but this is certain, that flattery, worldliness, mammon worship, are vices as well known to young as to old boys; and a rich lad at school or college has his followers, tuft-hunters, led-captains, little courts, just as much as any elderly millionaire of Pall Mall, who gazes round his Club to see whom he shall take home to dinner, while humble trenchermen wait anxiously, thinking—Ah! will he take me this time? or will he ask that abominable sneak and toady Henchman again? Well—well! this is an old story about parasites and flatterers. My dear good sir, I am not for a moment going to say that *you* ever were one; and I daresay it was very base and mean of

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us to like a man chiefly on account of his money. "I know"—Fred Lovel used to say—"I know fellows come to my rooms because I have a large allowance, and plenty of my poor old governor's wine, and give good dinners: I am not deceived; but, at least, it is pleasanter to come to me and have good dinners, and good wine, than to go to Jack Highson's dreary tea and turnout, or to Ned Roper's abominable Oxbridge port." And so I admit at once that Lovel's parties *were* more agreeable than most men's in the College. Perhaps the goodness of the fare, by pleasing the guests, made them more pleasant. A dinner in hall and a pewter plate is all very well, and I can say grace before it with all my heart; but a dinner with fish from London, game, and two or three nice little *entrées*, is better—and there was no better cook in the University than ours at Saint Boniface, and ah me! there were appetites then, and digestions which rendered the good dinner doubly good.

Between me and young Lovel a friendship sprang up, which, I trust, even the publication of this story will not diminish. There is a period, immediately after the taking of his bachelor's degree, when many a University-man finds himself embarrassed. The tradesmen rather rudely press for a settlement of their accounts. Those prints we ordered *calidi juventâ;* those shirt-studs and pins which the jewellers would persist in thrusting into our artless bosoms; those fine coats we would insist on having for our books, as well as ourselves; all these have to be paid for by the graduate. And my father, who was then alive, refusing to meet these demands, under the—I own—just plea, that my allowance had been ample, and that my half-sisters ought not to be mulcted of their slender portions in consequence of my extravagance, I should have been subject to very serious inconvenience—nay, possibly, to personal incarceration—had not Lovel, at the risk of rustication, rushed up to London to his mother (who then had *especial reasons* for being very gracious with her son), obtained a supply of money from her, and brought it to me at Mr. Shackell's horrible hotel, where I was lodged. He had tears in his kind eyes; he grasped my hand a hundred and hundred times as he flung the notes into my lap; and the recording tutor (Sargent was only tutor then), who was going to bring him up before the master for breach of discipline, dashed away a drop from his own lid, when, with a moving eloquence, I told what had happened, and blotted out the transaction with some particular old 1811 port, of which we freely partook in his private rooms that evening. By laborious instalments, I had the happiness to pay Lovel back. I took pupils, as I said; I engaged in literary pursuits: I became connected with a literary periodical, and, I am

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ashamed to say, I imposed myself upon the public as a good classical scholar. I was not thought the less learned, when, my relative dying, I found myself in possession of a small independency; and my "Translations from the Greek," my "Poems by Beta," and my articles in the paper of which I was part proprietor for several years, have had their little success in their day.

Indeed at Oxbridge, if I did not obtain University honours, at least I showed literary tastes. I got the prize essay one year at Boniface, and plead guilty to having written essays, poems, and a tragedy. My College friends had a joke at my expense (a very small joke serves to amuse those port-wine-bibbing fogies, and keeps them laughing for ever so long a time)—they are welcome, I say, to make merry at my charges—in respect of a certain bargain which I made on coming to London, and in which, had I been Moses Primrose purchasing green spectacles, I could scarcely have been more taken in. *My* Jenkinson was an old College acquaintance, whom I was idiot enough to imagine a respectable man: the fellow had a very smooth tongue, and sleek sanctified exterior. He was rather a popular preacher, and used to cry a good deal in the pulpit. He, and a queer wine-merchant and bill-discounter, Sherrick by name, had somehow got possession of that neat little literary paper, the *Museum*, which, perhaps, you remember; and this eligible literary property my friend Honeyman, with his wheedling tongue, induced me to purchase. I bear no malice: the fellow is in India now, where I trust he pays his butcher and baker. He was in dreadful straits for money when he sold me the *Museum*. He began crying when I told him some short time afterwards that he was a swindler, and from behind his pocket-handkerchief sobbed a prayer that I should one day think better of him; whereas my remarks to the same effect produced an exactly contrary impression upon his accomplice, Sherrick, who burst out laughing in my face, and said, "The more fool you!" Mr. Sherrick was right. He was a fool, without mistake, who had any money-dealing with him; and poor Honeyman was right, too; I don't think so badly of him as I did. A fellow so hardly pinched for money could not resist the temptation of extracting it from such a greenhorn. I daresay I gave myself airs as editor of that confounded *Museum*, and proposed to educate the public taste, to diffuse morality and sound literature throughout the nation, and to pocket a liberal salary in return for my services. I daresay I printed my own sonnets, my own tragedy, my own verses (to a Being who shall be nameless, but whose conduct has caused a faithful heart to bleed not a little). I daresay I wrote satirical articles, in which I piqued myself upon the fineness of my wit, and criticisms, got up for the nonce out of encyclopædias

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and biographical dictionaries; so that I would be actually astounded at my own knowledge. I daresay I made a gaby of myself to the world: pray, my good friend, hast thou never done likewise? If thou hast never been a fool, be sure thou wilt never be a wise man.

I think it was my brilliant *confrère* on the first floor (he had pecuniary transactions with Sherrick, and visited two or three of her Majesty's metropolitan prisons at that gentleman's suit) who first showed me how grievously I had been cheated in the newspaper matter. Slumley wrote for a paper printed at our office. The same boy often brought proofs to both of us—a little bit of a puny bright-eyed chap, who looked scarce twelve years old, when he was sixteen; who in wit was a man, when in stature he was a child,—like many other children of the poor.

This little Dick Bedford used to sit many hours asleep on my landing-place or Slumley's, whilst we were preparing our invaluable compositions within our respective apartments. S—— was a good-natured reprobate, and gave the child of his meat and his drink. I used to like to help the little man from my breakfast, and see him enjoy the meal. As he sat, with his bag on his knees, his head sunk in sleep, his little highlows scarce reaching the floor, Dick made a touching little picture. The whole house was fond of him. The tipsy Captain nodded him a welcome as he swaggered downstairs, stock, and coat, and waistcoat in hand, to his worship's toilette in the back kitchen. The children and Dick were good friends; and Elizabeth patronised him, and talked with him now and again, in her grave way. You know Clancy the composer?—know him better, perhaps, under his name of Friedrich Donner? Donner used to write music to Slumley's words, or *vice versâ;* and would come now and again to Beak Street, where he and his poet would try their joint work at the piano. At the sound of that music, little Dick's eyes used to kindle. "Oh, it's prime!" said the young enthusiast. And I will say, that good-natured miscreant of a Slumley not only gave the child pence, but tickets for the play, concerts, and so forth. Dick had a neat little suit of clothes at home; his mother made him a very nice little waistcoat out of my undergraduate's gown, and he and she, a decent woman, when in their best raiment, looked respectable enough for any theatre-pit in England.

Amongst other places of public amusement which he attended, Mr. Dick frequented the Academy where Miss Bellenden danced, and whence poor Elizabeth Prior issued forth after midnight in her shabby frock. And once, the Captain, Elizabeth's father and protector, being unable to walk very accurately, and noisy and incoherent

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in his speech, so that the attention of Messieurs of the police was directed towards him, Dick came up, placed Elizabeth and her father in a cab, paid the fare with his own money, and brought the whole party home in triumph, himself sitting on the box of the vehicle. I chanced to be coming home myself (from one of Mrs. Wateringham's elegant tea *soirées*, in Dorset Square), and reached my door just at the arrival of Dick and his caravan. "Here, cabby!" says Dick, handing out the fare, and looking with his brightest eyes. It is pleasanter to look at that beaming little face, than at the Captain yonder, reeling into his house, supported by his daughter. Dick cried, Elizabeth told me, when, a week afterwards, she wanted to pay him back his shilling; and she said he was a strange child, that he was.

I revert to my friend Lovel. I was coaching Lovel for his degree (which, between ourselves, I think he never would have attained), when he suddenly announced to me, from Weymouth, where he was passing the vacation, his intention to quit the University, and to travel abroad. "Events have happened, dear friend," he wrote, "which will make my mother's home miserable to me (I little knew when I went to town about your business, what caused her *wonderful complaisance* to me). She would have broken my heart, Charles" (my Christian name is Charles), "but its wounds have found a *consoler!*"

Now, in this little chapter, there are some little mysteries propounded, upon which, were I not above any such artifice, I might easily leave the reader to ponder for a month.

1. Why did Mrs. Prior, at the lodgings, persist in calling the theatre at which her daughter danced the Academy?

2. What were the special reasons why Mrs. Lovel should be very gracious with her son, and give him £150 as soon as he asked for the money?

3. Why was Fred Lovel's heart nearly broken? And—

4. Who was his consoler?

I answer these at once, and without the slightest attempt at delay or circumlocution. 1. Mrs. Prior, who had repeatedly received money from her brother, John Erasmus Sargent, D.D., Master of St. Boniface College, knew perfectly well that if the Master (whom she already pestered out of his life) heard that she had sent a niece of his on the stage, he would never give her another shilling.

2. The reason why Emma, widow of the late Adolphus Loeffel, of Whitechapel Road, sugar-baker, was so particularly gracious to her son, Adolphus Frederick Lovel, Esquire, of Saint Boniface College, Oxbridge, and principal partner in the house of Loeffel

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aforesaid, an infant, was that she, Emma, was about to contract a second marriage with the Reverend Samuel Bonnington.

3. Fred Lovel's heart was so very much broken by this intelligence, that he gave himself airs of Hamlet, dressed in black, wore his long fair hair over his eyes, and exhibited a hundred signs of grief and desperation; until—

4. Louisa (widow of the late Sir Popham Baker, of Bakerstown, county Kilkenny, Baronet) induced Mr. Lovel to take a trip on the Rhine with her and Cecilia, fourth and only unmarried daughter of the aforesaid Sir Popham Baker, deceased.

My opinion of Cecilia I have candidly given in a previous page. I adhere to that opinion. I shall not repeat it. The subject is disagreeable to me, as the woman herself was in life. What Fred found in her to admire I cannot tell: lucky for us all that tastes, men, women, vary. You will never see her alive in this history. That is her picture, painted by the late Mr. Gandish. She stands fingering that harp with which she has often driven me half mad with her "Tara's Halls" and her "Poor Marianne." She used to bully Fred so, and be so rude to his guests, that, in order to pacify her, he would meanly say, "Do, my love, let us have a little music!" and thrumpty—thrumpty, off would go her gloves, and "Tara's Halls" would begin. "The harp that *once*," indeed! the accursed catgut scarce knew any other music, and "once" was a hundred times at least in *my* hearing. Then came the period when I was treated to the cold joint which I have mentioned; and, not liking it, I gave up going to Shrublands.

So, too, did my Lady Baker, but not of *her own free will*, mind you. *She* did not quit the premises because her reception was too cold, but because the house was made a great deal too hot for her. I remember Fred coming to me in high spirits, and describing to me, with no little humour, a great battle between Cecilia and Lady Baker, and her Ladyship's defeat and flight. She fled, however, only as far as Putney village, where she formed again, as it were, and fortified herself in a lodging. Next day she made a desperate but feeble attack, presenting herself at Shrublands lodge-gate, and threatening that she and sorrow would sit down before it; and that all the world should know how a daughter treated her mother. But the gate was locked, and Barnet, the gardener, appeared behind it, saying, "Since you *are* come, my Lady, perhaps you will pay my missis the four-and-twenty shillings you borrowed of her." And he grinned at her through the bars, until she fled before him, cowering. Lovel paid the little forgotten account; the best four-and-twenty shillings he had ever laid out, he said.

Eight years passed away; during the last four of which I

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scarce saw my old friend, except at clubs and taverns, where we met privily, and renewed, not old warmth and hilarity, but old kindness. One winter he took his family abroad; Cecilia's health was delicate, Lovel told me, and the doctor had advised that she should spend a winter in the South. He did not stay with them: he had pressing affairs at home; he had embarked in many businesses besides the paternal sugar-bakery; was concerned in companies, a director of a joint-stock bank, a man in whose fire were many irons. A faithful governess was with the children; a faithful man and maid were in attendance on the invalid; and Lovel, adoring his wife, as he certainly did, yet supported her absence with great equanimity.

In the spring I was not a little scared to read amongst the deaths in the newspaper:—"At Naples, of scarlet fever, on the 25th ult., Cecilia, wife of Frederick Lovel, Esquire, and daughter of the late Sir Popham Baker, Baronet." I knew what my friend's grief would be. He had hurried abroad at the news of her illness; he did not reach Naples in time to receive the last words of his poor Cecilia.

Some months after the catastrophe, I had a note from Shrublands. Lovel wrote quite in the old affectionate tone. He begged his dear old friend to go to him, and console him in his solitude. Would I come to dinner that evening?

Of course I went off to him straightway. I found him in deep sables in the drawing-room with his children, and I confess I was not astonished to see my Lady Baker once more in that room.

"You seem surprised to see me here, Mr. Batchelor?" says her Ladyship, with that grace and good breeding which she generally exhibited; for if she accepted benefits, she took care to insult those from whom she received them.

"Indeed, no," said I, looking at Lovel, who piteously hung down his head. He had his little Cissy at his knee: he was sitting under the portrait of the defunct musician, whose harp, now muffled in leather, stood dimly in the corner of the room.

"I am here not at my own wish, but from a feeling of duty towards that—departed—angel!" says Lady Baker, pointing to the picture.

"I am sure when mamma was here, you were always quarrelling," says little Popham, with a scowl.

"This is the way those innocent children have been taught to regard me," cries grandmamma.

"Silence, Pop," says papa, "and don't be a rude boy."

"Isn't Pop a rude boy?" echoes Cissy.

"Silence, Pop," continues papa, "or you must go up to Miss Prior."

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CHAPTER II

IN WHICH MISS PRIOR IS KEPT AT THE DOOR

OF course we all know who she was, the Miss Prior of Shrublands, whom papa and grandmamma called to the unruly children. Years had passed since I had shaken the Beak Street dust off my feet. The brass plate of "Prior" was removed from the once familiar door, and screwed, for what I can tell, on to the late reprobate owner's coffin. A little eruption of mushroom-formed brass knobs I saw on the door-post when I passed by it last week, and CAFÉ DES AMBASSADEURS was thereon inscribed, with three fly-blown blue teacups, a couple of coffee-pots of the well-known Britannia metal, and two freckled copies of the *Indépendance Belge* hanging over the window-blind. Were those their Excellencies the Ambassadors at the door, smoking cheroots? Pool and Billiards were written on their countenances, their hats, their elbows. They may have been ambassadors down on their luck, as the phrase is. They were in disgrace, no doubt, at the court of her imperial majesty Queen Fortune. Men as shabby have retrieved their disgraces ere now, washed their cloudy faces, strapped their dingy waistcoats with cordons, and stepped into fine carriages from quarters not a whit more reputable than the "Café des Ambassadeurs." If I lived in the Leicester Square neighbourhood, and kept a café, I would always treat foreigners with respect. They may be billiard-markers now, or doing a little shady police business; but why should they not afterwards be generals and great officers of state? Suppose that gentleman is at present a barber, with his tongs and stick of fixature for the moustaches, how do you know he has not his epaulettes and his *bâton de maréchal* in the same pouch? I see engraven on the second-floor bell, on my rooms, "Plugwell." Who can Plugwell be, whose feet now warm at the fire where I sat many a long evening? And this gentleman with the fur collar, the straggling beard, the frank and engaging leer, the somewhat husky voice, who is calling out on the door-step, "Step in, and 'ave it done. Your correct likeness, only one shilling"—is he an ambassador too? Ah, no: he is only the *chargé-d'affaires* of a photographer who lives upstairs: no doubt

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where the little ones used to be. Bless me! Photography was an infant, and in the nursery, too, when *we* lived in Beak Street.

Shall I own that, for old times' sake, I went upstairs, and "'ad it done"—that correct likeness, price one shilling? Would Some One (I have said, I think, that the party in question is well married in a distant island) like to have the thing, I wonder, and be reminded of a man whom she knew in life's prime, with brown curly locks, as she looked on the effigy of this elderly gentleman, with a forehead as bare as a billiard-ball?

As I went up and down that darkling stair, the ghosts of the Prior children peeped out from the banisters; the little faces smiled in the twilight: it may be wounds (of the heart) throbbed and bled again,—oh, how freshly and keenly! How infernally I have suffered behind that door in that room—I mean that one where Plugwell now lives. Confound Plugwell! I wonder what that woman thinks of me as she sees me shaking my fist at the door? Do you think me mad, madam? I don't care if you do. Do you think when I spoke anon of the ghosts of Prior's children, I mean that any of them are dead? None are, that I know of. A great hulking Bluecoat-boy, with fluffy whiskers, spoke to me not long since, in an awful bass voice, and announced his name as "Gus Prior." And "How's Elizabeth?" he added, nodding his bullet head. Elizabeth, indeed, you great vulgar boy! Elizabeth,—and, by the way, how long we have been keeping her waiting!

You see, as I beheld her, a heap of memories struck upon me, and I could not help chattering; when of course—and you are perfectly right, only you might just as well have left the observation alone: for I knew quite well what you were going to say—when I had much better have held my tongue. Elizabeth means a history to me. She came to me at a critical period of my life. Bleeding and wounded from the conduct of that other individual (by her present name of Mrs. O'D—her present *O'D*-ous name—I say, I will never—never call her)—desperately wounded and miserable on my return from a neighbouring capital, I went back to my lodgings in Beak Street, and there there grew up a strange intimacy between me and my landlady's young daughter. I told her my story—indeed, I believe I told anybody who would listen. She seemed to compassionate me. She would come wistfully into my rooms, bringing me my gruel and things (I could scarcely bear to eat for a while after—after that affair to which I may have alluded before)—she used to come to me, and she used to pity me, and I used to tell her all, and to tell her over and over again. Days and days have I passed tearing my heart out in that second-floor room which answers to the name of Plugwell now. Afternoon after afternoon have I spent

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there, and poured out my story of love and wrong to Elizabeth, shown her that waistcoat I told you of—that glove (her hand wasn't so very small either)—her letters, those two or three vacuous, meaningless letters, with "My dear sir—mamma hopes you will come to tea;" or, "If dear Mr. Batchelor *should* be riding in the Phœnix Park near the *Long Milestone*, about 2, my sister and I will be in the car, and," &c.; or, "Oh, you kind man! the tickets" (she called it *tickuts*—by heaven! she did) "were too welcome, and the *bouquays* too lovely" (this word, I saw, had been operated on with a penknife. I found no faults, not even in her spelling—then); or—never mind what more. But more of this *puling*, of this *humbug*, of this *bad spelling*, of this infernal jilting, swindling, heartless hypocrisy (all her mother's doing, I own; for until he *got his place*, my rival was not so well received as I was)—more of this RUBBISH, I say, I showed Elizabeth, and she pitied me!

She used to come to me day after day, and I used to talk to her. She used not to say much. Perhaps she did not listen; but I did not care for that. On—and on—and on I would go with my prate about my passion, my wrongs, and despair; and untiring as my complaints were, still more constant was my little hearer's compassion. Mamma's shrill voice would come to put an end to our conversation, and she would rise up with an "Oh, bother!" and go away: but the next day the good girl was sure to come to me again, when we would have another repetition of our tragedy.

I daresay you are beginning to suppose (what, after all, is a very common case, and certainly *no conjurer* is wanted to make the guess) that out of all this crying and sentimentality, which a soft-hearted old fool of a man poured out to a young girl—out of all this whimpering and pity, something which is said to be akin to pity might arise. But in this, my good madam, you are utterly wrong. Some people have the small-pox twice; *I do not*. In my case, if a heart is broke, it's broke: if a flower is withered, it's withered. If I choose to put my grief in a ridiculous light, why not? why do you suppose I am going to make a tragedy of such an old used-up, battered, stale, vulgar, trivial every-day subject as a jilt who plays with a man's passion, and laughs at him, and leaves him? Tragedy indeed! Oh, yes! poison — black-edged note-paper — Waterloo Bridge—one more unfortunate, and so forth! No: if she goes, let her go!—*si celeres quatit pennas*, I puff the what-d'ye-call-it away! But I'll have no *tragedy*, mind you.

Well, it must be confessed that a man desperately in love (as I fear I must own I then was, and a good deal cut up by Glorvina's conduct) is a most selfish being: whilst women are so soft and unselfish that they can forget or disguise their own sorrows for a

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while, whilst they minister to a friend in affliction. I did not see, though I talked with her daily, on my return from that accursed Dublin, that my little Elizabeth was pale and *distraite*, and sad, and silent. She would sit quite dumb whilst I chattered, her hands between her knees, or draw one of them over her eyes. She would say, "Oh, yes! Poor fellow—poor fellow!" now and again, as giving a melancholy confirmation of my dismal stories; but mostly she remained quiet, her head drooping towards the ground, a hand to her chin, her feet to the fender.

I was one day harping on the usual string. I was telling Elizabeth how, after presents had been accepted, after letters had passed between us (if her scrawl could be called letters, if my impassioned song could be so construed), after everything but the actual word had passed our lips—I was telling Elizabeth how, on one accursed day, Glorvina's mother greeted me on my arrival in M–rr–n Square by saying, "Dear, dear Mr. Batchelor, we look on you quite as one of the family! Congratulate me—congratulate my child! Dear Tom has got his appointment as Recorder of Tobago; and it is to be a match between him and his cousin Glory."

"His cousin *What?*" I shriek with a maniac laugh.

"My poor Glorvina! Sure the children have been fond of each other ever since they could speak. I knew your kind heart would be the first to rejoice in their happiness."

And so, say I—ending the story—I, who thought myself loved, was left without a pang of pity: I, who could mention a hundred reasons why I thought Glorvina well disposed to me, was told she regarded me as an *uncle!* Were her letters such as nieces write? Who ever heard of an uncle walking round Merrion Square for hours of a rainy night, and looking up to a bedroom window, because his *niece*, forsooth, was behind it? I had set my whole heart on the cast, and this was the return I got for it. For months she cajoles me—her eyes follow me, her cursed smiles welcome and fascinate me, and at a moment, at the beck of another—she laughs at me and leaves me!

At this, my little pale Elizabeth, still hanging down, cries, "Oh, the villain! the villain!" and sobs so that you might have thought her little heart would break.

"Nay," said I, "my dear, Mr. O'Dowd is no villain. His uncle, Sir Hector, was as gallant an old officer as any in the service. His aunt was a Molloy, of Molloystown, and they are of excellent family, though, I believe, of embarrassed circumstances; and young Tom——"

"*Tom?*" cries Elizabeth, with a pale bewildered look. "*His*

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name wasn't Tom, dear Mr. Batchelor; *his name was Woo-woo-illiam!*" and the tears begin again.

Ah, my child! my child! my poor young creature! and you, too, have felt the infernal stroke. You, too, have passed the tossing nights of pain—have heard the dreary hours toll—have looked at the cheerless sunrise with your blank sleepless eyes—have woke out of dreams, mayhap, in which the beloved one was smiling on you, whispering love-words—oh! how sweet and fondly remembered! What!—your heart has been robbed, too, and your treasury is rifled and empty!—poor girl! And I looked in that sad face, and saw no grief there! You could do your little sweet endeavour to soothe my wounded heart, and I never saw yours was bleeding! Did you suffer more than I did, my poor little maid? I hope not. Are you so young, and is all the flower of life blighted for you? the cup without savour, the sun blotted or almost invisible over your head? The truth came on me all at once: I felt ashamed that my own selfish grief should have made me blind to hers.

"What!" said I, "my poor child? Was it . . .?" and I pointed with my finger *downwards*.

She nodded her poor head.

I knew it was the lodger who had taken the first floor shortly after Slumley's departure. He was an officer in the Bombay Army. He had had the lodgings for three months. He had sailed for India shortly before I returned home from Dublin.

Elizabeth is waiting all this time—shall she come in? No, not yet. I have still a little more to say about the Priors.

You understand that she was no longer Miss Prior of Beak Street, and that mansion, even at the time of which I write, had been long handed over to other tenants. The Captain dead, his widow with many tears pressed me to remain with her, and I did, never having been able to resist that kind of appeal. Her statements regarding her affairs were not strictly correct.—Are not women sometimes incorrect about money matters?—A landlord (not unjustly indignant) quickly handed over the mansion in Beak Street to other tenants. The Queen's taxes swooped down on poor Mrs. Prior's scanty furniture—on hers?—on mine likewise: on my neatly-bound College books, emblazoned with the effigy of Bonifacius, our patron, and of Bishop Budgeon, our founder; on my elegant Raphael Morghen prints, purchased in undergraduate days—(ye Powers! what *did* make us boys go tick for fifteen-guinea proofs of Raphael, Dying Stags, Duke of Wellington Banquets, and the like?); my harmonium, at which SOME ONE has warbled songs of my composition—(I mean the words, artfully describing my passion, my hopes, or my despair); on my rich set of Bohemian

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glass, bought on the Zeil, Frankfort O. M.; on my picture of my father, the late Captain Batchelor (Hoppner), R.N.; in white ducks, and a telescope, pointing, of course, to a tempest, in the midst of which was a naval engagement; on my poor mother's miniature, by old Adam Buck, in pencil and pink, with no waist to speak of at all; my tea and cream pots (bullion), with a hundred such fond knicknacks as decorate the chamber of a lonely man. I found all these household treasures in possession of the myrmidons of the law, and had to pay the Priors' taxes with this hand, before I could be redintegrated in my own property. Mrs. Prior could only pay me back with a widow's tears and blessings (Prior having quitted a world where he had long ceased to be of use or ornament). The tears and blessings, I say, she offered me freely, and they were all very well. But why go on tampering with the tea-box, madam? Why put your finger—your finger?—your whole paw—in the jam-pot? And it is a horrible fact that the wine and spirit bottles were just as leaky after Prior's decease as they had been during his disreputable lifetime. One afternoon, having a sudden occasion to return to my lodgings, I found my wretched landlady in the very act of marauding sherry. She gave an hysterical laugh, and then burst into tears. She declared that since her poor Prior's death she hardly knew what she said or did. She may have been incoherent; she was; but she certainly spoke truth on *this* occasion.

I am speaking lightly—flippantly, if you please—about this old Mrs. Prior, with her hard eager smile, her wizened face, her frowning look, her cruel voice; and yet, goodness knows, I could, if I liked, be as serious as a sermoniser. Why, this woman had once red cheeks, and was well-looking enough, and told few lies, and stole no sherry, and felt the tender passions of the heart, and I daresay kissed the weak old beneficed clergyman her father very fondly and remorsefully that night when she took leave of him to skip round to the back garden-gate and run away with Mr. Prior. Maternal instinct she had, for she nursed her young as best she could from her lean breast, and went about hungrily, robbing and pilfering for them. On Sundays she furbished up that threadbare black silk gown and bonnet, ironed the collar, and clung desperately to church. She had a feeble pencil-drawing of the vicarage in Dorsetshire, and *silhouettes* of her father and mother, which were hung up in the lodgings wherever she went. She migrated much: wherever she went she fastened on the gown of the clergyman of the parish; spoke of her dear father the vicar, of her wealthy and gifted brother the Master of Boniface, with a reticence which implied that Doctor Sargent might do more for his poor sister and her

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family, if he would. She plumed herself (oh! those poor moulting old plumes!) upon belonging to the clergy; had read a good deal of good sound old-fashioned theology in early life, and wrote a noble hand, in which she had been used to copy her father's sermons. She used to put cases of conscience, to present her humble duty to the Reverend Mr. Green, and ask explanation of such and such a passage of his admirable sermon, and bring the subject round so as to be reminded of certain quotations of Hooker, Beveridge, Jeremy Taylor. I think she had an old commonplace book with a score of these extracts, and she worked them in very amusingly and dexterously into her conversation. Green would be interested: perhaps pretty young Mrs. Green would call, secretly rather shocked at the coldness of old Doctor Brown, the rector, about Mrs. Prior. Between Green and Mrs. Prior money transactions would ensue: Mrs. Green's visits would cease: Mrs. Prior was an expensive woman to know. I remember Pye of Maudlin, just before he "went over," was perpetually in Mrs. Prior's back parlour with little books, pictures, medals, &c. &c.—you know. They called poor Jack a Jesuit at Oxbridge; but one year at Rome I met him (with a half-crown shaved out of his head, and a hat as big as Don Basilio's); and he said, "My dear Batchelor, do you know that person at your lodgings? I think she was an artful creature! She borrowed fourteen pounds of me, and I forget how much of—seven, I think—of Barfoot, of Corpus, just—just before we were received. And I believe she absolutely got another loan from Pummel, to be able to get out of the hands of us Jesuits. Are you going to hear the Cardinal? Do—do go and hear him—everybody does: it's the most fashionable thing in Rome." And from this I opine that there are slyboots in other communions besides that of Rome.

Now Mamma Prior had not been unaware of the love-passages between her daughter and the fugitive Bombay captain. Like Elizabeth, she called Captain Walkingham "villain" readily enough; but, if I know woman's nature in the least (and I don't), the old schemer had thrown her daughter only too frequently in the officer's way, had done no small portion of the flirting herself, had allowed poor Bessy to receive presents from Captain Walkingham, and had been the manager and directress of much of the mischief which ensued. You see, in this humble class of life, unprincipled mothers *will* coax and wheedle and cajole gentlemen whom they suppose to be eligible, in order to procure an establishment for their darling children! What the Prioress did was done from the best motives of course. "Never—never did the monster see Bessy without me, or one or two of her brothers and sisters, and Jack and dear Ellen are as sharp children as any in England!" protested the indignant

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Mrs. Prior to me; "and if one of my boys had been grown up, Walkingham never would have dared to act as he did—the unprincipled wretch! My poor husband would have punished the villain as he deserved; but what could he do in his shattered state of health? Oh! you men,—you men, Mr. Batchelor! how *unprincipled* you are!"

"Why, my good Mrs. Prior," said I, "you let Elizabeth come to my room often enough."

"To have the conversation of her uncle's friend, of an educated man, of a man so much older than herself! Of course, dear sir! Would not a mother wish every advantage for her child? and whom could I trust, if not you, who have ever been such a friend to me and mine?" asks Mrs. Prior, wiping her dry eyes with the corner of her handkerchief, as she stands by my fire, my monthly bills in hand,—written in her neat old-fashioned writing, and calculated with that prodigal liberality which she always exercised in compiling the little accounts between us. "Why, bless me!" says my cousin, little Mrs. Skinner, coming to see me once when I was unwell, and examining one of the just mentioned documents,—"bless me! Charles, you consume more tea than all my family, though we are seven in the parlour, and as much sugar and butter,—well, it's no wonder you are bilious!"

"But then, my dear, I like my tea so *very* strong," said I; "and you take yours so uncommonly mild. I have remarked it at your parties."

"It's a shame that a man should be robbed so," cried Mrs. S.

"How kind it is of you to cry thieves, Flora!" I reply.

"It's my duty, Charles!" exclaims my cousin. "And I should like to know who that great, tall, gawky, red-haired girl in the passage is!"

Ah me! the name of the only woman who ever had possession of this heart was not Elizabeth; though I own I did think at one time that my little schemer of a landlady would not have objected if I had proposed to make Miss Prior Mrs. Batchelor. And it is not only the poor and needy who have this mania, but the rich too. In the very highest circles, as I am informed by the best authorities, this match-making goes on. Ah woman—woman!—ah wedded wife!—ah fond mother of fair daughters! how strange thy passion is to add to thy titles that of mother-in-law! I am told, when you have got the title, it is often but a bitterness and a disappointment. Very likely the son-in-law is rude to you, the coarse ungrateful brute! and very possibly the daughter rebels, the thankless serpent! And yet you will go on scheming: and having met only with disappointment from Louisa and her husband, you will try and get one for Jemima, and Maria, and down even to

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little Toddles coming out of the nursery in her red shoes! When you see her with little Tommy, your neighbour's child, fighting over the same Noah's ark, or clambering on the same rocking-horse, I make no doubt, in your fond silly head, you are thinking, "Will those little people meet some twenty years hence?" And you give Tommy a very large piece of cake, and have a fine present for him on the Christmas tree—you know you do, though he is but a rude noisy child, and has already beaten Toddles, and taken her doll away from her, and made her cry. I remember, when I myself was suffering from the conduct of a young woman in—in a capital which is distinguished by a viceregal Court—and from *her* heartlessness, as well as that of her relative, who I once thought would be *my* mother-in-law—shrieking out to a friend who happened to be spouting some lines from Tennyson's "Ulysses":—"By George! Warrington, I have no doubt that when the young sirens set their green caps at the old Greek captain and his crew, waving and beckoning him with their white arms and glancing smiles, and wheedling him with their sweetest pipes—I make no doubt, sir, that *the mother sirens* were behind the rocks (with their dyed fronts and cheeks painted, so as to resist water), and calling out 'Now, Halcyone, my child, that air from the Pirata! Now, Glaukopis, dear, look well at that old gentleman at the helm! Bathykolpos, love, there's a young sailor on the maintop, who will tumble right down into your lap if you beckon him!' And so on—and so on." And I laughed a wild shriek of despair. For I, too, have been on the dangerous island, and come away thence, mad, furious, wanting a strait-waistcoat.

And so, when a white-armed siren, named Glorvina, was bedevilling *me* with her all too tempting ogling and singing, I did not see at the time, but *now* I know, that her artful mother was egging that artful child on.

How, when the Captain died, bailiffs and executions took possession of his premises, I have told in a previous page, nor do I care to enlarge much upon the odious theme. I think the bailiffs were on the premises before Prior's exit: but he did not know of their presence. If I had to buy them out, 'twas no great matter: only I say it *was* hard of Mrs. Prior to represent me in the character of Shylock to the Master of Boniface. Well—well! I suppose there are other gentlemen besides Mr. Charles Batchelor who have been misrepresented in this life. Sargent and I made up matters afterwards, and Miss Bessy was the cause of our coming together again. "Upon my word, my dear Batchelor," says he one Christmas, when I went up to the old College, "I did not know how much my—ahem!—my family was obliged to you!

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My—ahem!—niece, Miss Prior, has informed me of various acts of—ahem!—generosity which you showed to my poor sister, and her still more wretched husband. You got my second—ahem!—nephew—pardon me if I forget his Christian name—into the what-d'you-call'em—Bluecoat School; you have been, on various occasions, of considerable pecuniary service to my sister's family. A man need not take high university honours to have a good—ahem!—heart; and, upon my word, Batchelor, I and my—ahem!—wife are sincerely obliged to you!"

"I tell you what, Master," said I, "there *is* a point upon which you ought really to be obliged to me, and in which I have been the means of putting money into your pocket too."

"I confess I fail to comprehend you," says the Master, with his grandest air.

"I have got you and Mrs. Sargent a very good governess for your children, at the very smallest remuneration," say I.

"Do you know the charges that unhappy sister of mine and her family have put me to already?" says the Master, turning as red as his hood.

"They have formed the frequent subject of your conversation," I replied. "You have had Bessy as a governess——"

"A nursery governess—she has learned Latin and a great deal more, since she has been in my house," cries the Master.

"A nursery governess at the wages of a housemaid," I continued, as bold as Corinthian brass.

"Does my niece, does my—ahem!—children's governess, complain of her treatment in my College?" cries the Master.

"My dear Master," I asked, "you don't suppose I would have listened to her complaints, or, at any rate, have repeated them, until now!"

"And why now, Batchelor, I should like to know?" says the Master, pacing up and down his study in a fume, under the portraits of Holy Bonifacius, Bishop Budgeon, and all the defunct bigwigs of the College. "And why now, Batchelor, I should like to know?" says he.

"Because—though after staying with you for three years, and having improved herself greatly, as every woman must in your society, my dear Master, Miss Prior is worth at least fifty guineas a year more than you give her—I would not have had her speak until she had found a better place."

"You mean to say she proposes to go away?"

"A wealthy friend of mine, who was a member of our College, by the way, wants a nursery governess, and I have recommended Miss Prior to him, at seventy guineas a year."

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"And pray who's the member of my College who will give my niece seventy guineas?" asked the Master fiercely.

"You remember Lovel, the gentleman-pensioner?"

"The sugar-baking man—the man who took you out of ja——?"

"One good turn deserves another," say I hastily. "I have done as much for some of your family, Sargent!"

The red Master, who had been rustling up and down his study in his gown and bands, stopped in his walk as if I had struck him. He looked at me. He turned redder than ever. He drew his hand over his eyes. "Batchelor," says he, "I ask your pardon. It was I who forgot myself—may Heaven forgive me!—forgot how good you have been to my family, to my—ahem!—*humble* family, and—and how devoutly thankful I ought to be for the protection which they have found in you." His voice quite fell as he spoke: and of course any little wrath which I might have felt was disarmed before his contrition. We parted the best friends. He not only shook hands with me at the study-door, but he actually followed me to the hall-door, and shook hands at his lodge-porch, *sub Jove*, in the quadrangle. Huckles, the tutor (Highlow Huckles we used to call him in our time), and Botts (Trumperian professor), who happened to be passing through the court at the time, stood aghast as they witnessed the phenomenon.

"I say, Batchelor," asks Huckles, "have you been made a marquis by any chance?"

"Why a marquis, Huckles?" I ask.

"Sargent never comes to his lodge-door with any man under a marquis," says Huckles, in a low whisper.

"Or a pretty woman," says that Botts (he *will* have his joke). "Batchelor, my elderly Tiresias, are you turned into a lovely young lady *par hasard?*"

"Get along, you absurd Trumperian professor!" say I. But the circumstance was the talk not only in Compotation Room that evening over our wine, but of the whole College. And further events happened which made each man look at his neighbour with wonder. For that whole term Sargent did not ask our nobleman Lord Sackville (Lord Wigmore's son) to the lodge. (Lord W.'s father, you know, Duff, was baker to the College.) For that whole term he was rude but twice to Perks, the junior tutor, and then only in a very mild way; and what is more, he gave his niece a present of a gown, of his blessing, of a kiss, and a high character when she went away;—and promised to put one of her young brothers to school—which promise, I need not say, he faithfully kept: for he has good principles, Sargent has. He is rude:

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he is ill bred: he is *bumptious* beyond almost any man I ever knew: he is spoiled not a little by prosperity;—but he is magnanimous: he can own that he has been in the wrong; and oh me! what a quantity of Greek he knows!

Although my late friend the Captain never seemed to do aught but spend the family money, his disreputable presence somehow acted for good in the household. "My dear husband kept our family together," Mrs. Prior said, shaking her lean head under her meagre widow's cap. "Heaven knows how I shall provide for these lambs now he is gone!" Indeed, it was not until after the death of that tipsy shepherd that the wolves of the law came down upon the lambs—myself included, who have passed the age of lambhood and mint sauce a long time. They came down upon our fold in Beak Street, I say, and ravished it. What was I to do? Could I leave that widow and children in their distress? I was not ignorant of misfortune, and knew how to succour the miserable. Nay, I think the little excitement attendant upon the seizure of my goods, &c., the insolent vulgarity of the low persons in possession—with one of whom I was very near coming to a personal encounter—and other incidents which occurred in the bereft household, served to rouse me, and dissipate some of the languor and misery under which I was suffering in consequence of Miss Mulligan's conduct to me. I know I took the late Captain to his final abode. My good friends the printers of the *Museum* took one of his boys into their counting-house. A blue coat and a pair of yellow stockings were procured for Augustus; and seeing the Master's children walking about in Boniface gardens with a glum-looking old wretch of a nurse, I bethought me of proposing to him to take his niece Miss Prior—and, Heaven be good to me! never said one word to her uncle about Miss Bellenden and the Academy. I daresay I drew a number of long bows about her. I managed about the bad grammar pretty well by lamenting that Elizabeth's poor mother had been forced to allow the girl to keep company with ill-educated people: and added, that she could not fail to mend her English in the house of one of the most distinguished scholars in Europe, and one of the best-bred women. I did say so, upon my word, looking that half-bred, stuck-up Mrs. Sargent gravely in the face; and I humbly trust, if that bouncer has been registered against me, the Recording Angel will be pleased to consider that the motive was good, though the statement was unjustifiable. But I don't think it was the compliment: I think it was the temptation of getting a governess for next to nothing that operated upon Madam Sargent. And so Bessy went to her aunt, partook of the bread of dependence, and drank of the cup of

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humiliation, and ate the pie of humility, and brought up her odious little cousins to the best of her small power, and bowed the head of hypocrisy before the don her uncle, and the pompous little upstart her aunt. *She* the best-bred woman in England, indeed! She, the little vain skinflint!

Bessy's mother was not a little loth to part with the fifty pounds a year which the child brought home from the Academy; but her departure thence was inevitable. Some quarrel had taken place there, about which the girl did not care to talk. Some rudeness had been offered to Miss Bellenden, to which Miss Prior was determined not to submit: or was it that she wanted to go away from the scenes of her own misery, and to try and forget that Indian captain? Come, fellow-sufferer! Come, child of misfortune, come hither! Here is an old bachelor who will weep with thee tear for tear!

I protest here is Miss Prior coming into the room at last. A pale face, a tawny head of hair combed back, under a black cap: a pair of blue spectacles, as I live! a tight mourning dress, buttoned up to her white throat; a head hung meekly down: such is Miss Prior. She takes my hand when I offer it. She drops me a demure little curtsey, and answers my many questions with humble monosyllabic replies. She appeals constantly to Lady Baker for instruction, or for confirmation of her statements. What! have six years of slavery so changed the frank daring young girl whom I remember in Beak Street! She is taller and stouter than she was. She is awkward and high-shouldered, but surely she has a very fine figure.

"Will Miss Cissy and Master Popham have their teas here or in the schoolroom?" asks Bedford, the butler, of his master. Miss Prior looks appealingly to Lady Baker.

"In the sch——" Lady Baker is beginning.

"Here—here!" bawl out the children. "Much better fun down here: and you'll send us out some fruit and things from dinner, papa!" cries Cissy.

"It's time to dress for dinner," says her Ladyship.

"Has the first bell rung?" asks Lovel.

"Yes, the first bell has rung, and grandmamma must go, for it always takes her a precious long time to dress for dinner!" cries Pop. And indeed, on looking at Lady Baker, the connoisseur might perceive that her Ladyship was a highly composite person, whose charms required very much care and arrangement. There are some cracked old houses where the painters and plumbers and puttyers are always at work.

"Have the goodness to ring the bell!" she says, in a majestic

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manner, to Miss Prior, though I think Lady Baker herself was nearest.

I sprang towards the bell myself, and my hand meets Elizabeth's there, who was obeying her Ladyship's summons, and who retreats, making me the demurest curtsey. At the summons, enter Bedford the butler (he was an old friend of mine too) and young Buttons, the page under that butler.

Lady Baker points to a heap of articles on a table, and says to Bedford: "If you please, Bedford, tell my man to give those things to Pincott, my maid, to be taken to my room."

"Shall not I take them up, dear Lady Baker?" says Miss Prior.

But Bedford, looking at his subordinate, says: "Thomas! tell Bulkeley, her Ladyship's man, to take her Ladyship's things, and give them to her Ladyship's maid." There was a tone of sarcasm, even of parody, in Monsieur Bedford's voice; but his manner was profoundly grave and respectful. Drawing up her person, and making a motion, I don't know whether of politeness or defiance, exit Lady Baker, followed by page, bearing bandboxes, shawls, paper parcels, parasols—I know not what. Dear Popham stands on his head as grandmamma leaves the room. "Don't be vulgar!" cries little Cissy (the dear child is always acting as a little Mentor to her brother). "I shall, if I like," says Pop; and he makes faces at her.

"You know your room, Batch?" asks the master of the house.

"Mr. Batchelor's old room—always has the blue room," says Bedford, looking very kindly at me.

"Give us," cried Lovel, "a bottle of that Sau——"

"——terne Mr. Batchelor used to like. Château Yquem. All right!" says Mr. Bedford. "How will you have the turbot done you brought down?—Dutch sauce?—Make lobster into salad? Mr. Bonnington likes lobster-salad," says Bedford. Pop is winding up the butler's back at this time. It is evident Mr. Bedford is a privileged person in the family. As he had entered it on my nomination several years ago, and had been ever since the faithful valet, butler, and major-domo of Lovel, Bedford and I were always good friends when we met.

"By the way, Bedford, why wasn't the barouche sent for me to the bridge?" cries Lovel. "I had to walk all the way home, with a bat and stumps for Pop, with the basket of fish, and that bandbox with my Lady's——"

"He—he!" grins Bedford.

"'He—he!' Confound you, why do you stand grinning there? Why didn't I have the carriage, I say?" bawls the master of the house.

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"*You* know, sir," says Bedford. "*She* had the carriage." And he indicated the door through which Lady Baker had just retreated.

"Then why didn't I have the phaeton?" asks Bedford's master.

"Your ma and Mr. Bonnington had the phaeton."

"And why shouldn't they, pray? Mr. Bonnington is lame: I'm at my business all day. I should like to know why they *shouldn't* have the phaeton?" says Lovel, appealing to me. As we had been sitting talking together previous to Miss Prior's appearance, Lady Baker had said to Lovel, "Your mother and Mr. Bonnington are coming to dinner *of course*, Frederick?" and Lovel had said, "Of course they are," with a peevish bluster, whereof I now began to understand the meaning. The fact was, these two women were fighting for the possession of this child; but who was the Solomon to say which should have him? Not I. *Nenni.* I put my oar in no man's boat. Give me an easy life, my dear friends, and row me gently over.

"You had better go and dress," says Bedford sternly, looking at his master; "the first bell has rung this quarter of an hour. Will you have some '34?"

Lovel started up; he looked at the clock. "You are all ready, Batch, I see. I hope you are going to stay some time, ain't you?" And he disappeared to array himself in his sables and starch. I was thus alone with Miss Prior and her young charges, who resumed straightway their infantine gambols and quarrels.

"My dear Bessy!" I cry, holding out both hands, "I am heartily glad to——"

"Ne m'appelez que de mon nom paternel devant tout ce monde, s'il vous plaît, mon cher ami, mon bon protecteur!" she says, hastily, in very good French, folding her hands and making a curtsey.

"Oui, oui, oui! Parlez-vous Français? J'aime, tu aimes, il aime!" cries out dear Master Popham. "What are you talking about? Here's the phaeton!" and the young innocent dashes through the open window on to the lawn, whither he is followed by his sister, and where we see the carriage containing Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington rolling over the smooth walk.

Bessy advances towards me, and gives me readily enough now the hand she had refused anon.

"I never thought you would have refused it, Bessy," said I.

"Refuse it to the best friend I ever had!" she says, pressing my hand. "Ah, dear Mr. Batchelor, what an ungrateful wretch I should be, if I did!"

"Let me see your eyes. Why do you wear spectacles? You

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BESSY'S SPECTACLES

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never wore them in Beak Street," I say. You see I was very fond of the child. She had wound herself around me in a thousand fond ways. Owing to a certain Person's conduct my heart may be a ruin—a Persepolis, sir—a perfect Tadmor. But what then? May not a traveller rest under its shattered columns? May not an Arab maid repose there till the morning dawns and the caravan passes on? Yes, my heart is a Palmyra, and once a Queen inhabited me (O Zenobia! Zenobia! to think thou should'st have been led away captive by an O'D—!). Now, I am alone, alone in the solitary wilderness. Nevertheless, if a stranger comes to me I have a spring for his weary feet, I will give him the shelter of my shade. Rest thy cheek awhile, young maiden, on my marble—then go thy ways and leave me.

This I thought, or something to this effect, as, in reply to my remark, "Let me see your eyes," Bessy took off her spectacles, and I took them up and looked at her. Why didn't I say to her, "My dear brave Elizabeth! as I look in your face, I see you have had an awful deal of suffering. Your eyes are inscrutably sad. We who are initiated, know the members of our Community of Sorrow. We have both been wrecked in different ships, and been cast on this shore. Let us go hand-in-hand, and find a cave and a shelter somewhere together!" I say, why didn't I say this to her? She would have come, I feel sure she would. We would have been semi-attached as it were. We would have locked up that room in either heart where the skeleton was, and said nothing about it, and pulled down the party wall and taken our mild tea in the garden. I live in Pump Court now. It would have been better than this dingy loneliness and a snuffy laundress who bullies me. But for Bessy? Well—well, perhaps better for her too.

I remember these thoughts rushing through my mind whilst I held the spectacles. What a number of other things too! I remember two canaries making a tremendous concert in their cage. I remember the voices of the two children quarrelling on the lawn, the sound of the carriage wheels grinding over the gravel; and then of a little old familiar cracked voice in my ear, with a "La, Mr. Batchelor; are *you* here?" And a sly face looks up at me from under an old bonnet.

"It is mamma," says Bessy.

"And I'm come to tea with Elizabeth and the dear children; and while you are at dinner, dear Mr. Batchelor, thankful—thankful for all mercies! And dear me! here is Mrs. Bonnington, I do declare! Dear madam, how well you look—not twenty, I declare! And dear Mr. Bonnington! Oh, sir! let me—let me, I *must* press your hand. What a sermon last Sunday! All Putney was in tears!"

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And the little woman, flinging out her lean arms, seizes portly Mr. Bonnington's fat hand, as he and kind Mrs. Bonnington enter at the open casement. The little woman seems inclined to do the honours of the house. "And won't you go upstairs, and put on your cap? Dear me, what a lovely ribbon! How blue does become Mrs. Bonnington! I always say so to Elizabeth," she cries, peeping into a little packet which Mrs. Bonnington bears in her hand. After exchanging friendly words and greetings with me, that lady retires to put the lovely cap on, followed by her little jackal of an aide-de-camp. The portly clergyman surveys his pleased person in the spacious mirror. "Your things are in your old room—like to go in, and brush up a bit?" whispers Bedford to me. I am obliged to go, you see, though, for my part, I had thought, until Bedford spoke, that the ride on the top of the Putney omnibus had left me without any need of brushing; having aired my clothes, and given my young cheek a fresh and agreeable bloom.

My old room, as Bedford calls it, was that snug apartment communicating by double doors with the drawing-room, and whence you can walk on to the lawn out of the windows.

"Here's your books, here's your writing-paper," says Bedford, leading the way into the chamber. "Does sore eyes good to see *you* down here again, sir. You may smoke now. Clarence Baker smokes when he comes. Go and get some of that wine you like for dinner." And the good fellow's eyes beam kindness upon me as he nods his head, and departs to superintend the duties of his table. Of course you understand that this Bedford was my young printer's boy of former days. What a queer fellow! I had not only been kind to him, but he was grateful.

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CHAPTER III

IN WHICH I PLAY THE SPY

THE room to which Bedford conducted me I hold to be the very pleasantest chamber in all the mansion of Shrublands. To lie on that comfortable cool bachelor's bed there, and see the birds hopping about on the lawn; to peep out of the French window at early morning, inhale the sweet air, mark the dewy bloom on the grass, listen to the little warblers performing their chorus, step forth in your dressing-gown and slippers, pick a strawberry from the bed, or an apricot in its season; blow one, two, three, just half a-dozen puffs of a cigarette; hear the venerable towers of Putney toll the hour of six (three hours from breakfast, by consequence), and pop back into bed again with a favourite novel, or review, to set you off (you see I am not malicious, or I could easily insert here the name of some twaddler against whom I have a grudgekin): to pop back into bed again, I say, with a book which sets you off into that dear invaluable second sleep, by which health, spirits, appetite are so prodigiously improved:—all these I hold to be most cheerful and harmless pleasures, and have partaken of them often at Shrublands with a grateful heart. That heart may have had its griefs, but is yet susceptible of enjoyment and consolation. That bosom may have been lacerated, but is not therefore and henceforward a stranger to comfort. After a certain affair in Dublin—nay, very soon after, three months after—I recollect remarking to myself: "Well, thank my stars, I still have a relish for '34 claret." Once at Shrublands I heard steps pacing overhead at night, and the feeble but continued wail of an infant. I wakened from my sleep, was sulky, but turned and slept again. Biddlecombe the barrister, I knew, was the occupant of the upper chamber. He came down the next morning looking wretchedly yellow about the cheeks, and livid round the eyes. His teething infant had kept him on the march all night, and Mrs. Biddlecombe, I am told, scolds him frightfully besides. He munched a shred of toast, and was off by the omnibus to chambers. I chipped a second egg; I may have tried one or two other nice little things on the table (Strasbourg pâté I know I never can resist, and am convinced

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it is perfectly wholesome). I could see my own sweet face in the mirror opposite, and my gills were as rosy as any broiled salmon. "Well—well!" I thought as the barrister disappeared on the roof of the coach, "he has *domus* and *placens uxor*—but is she *placens*? *Placetne* to walk about all night with a roaring baby? Is it pleasing to go to bed after a long hard day's work, and have your wife nagnagging you because she has not been invited to the Lady Chancelloress's *soirée*, or what not? Suppose the Glorvina whom you loved so had been yours? Her eyebrows looked as if they could scowl, her eyes as if they could flash with anger. Remember what a slap she gave the little knife-boy for upsetting the butter-boat over her tabinet. Suppose *parvulus auld*, a little Batchelor your son, who had the toothache all night in your bedroom?" These thoughts passed rapidly through my mind as I helped myself to the comfortable meal before me. "I say, what a lot of muffins you're eating!" cried innocent Master Lovel. Now the married, the wealthy, the prosperous Biddlecombe only took his wretched scrap of dry toast. "Aha!" you say, "this man is consoling himself after his misfortune." O churl! and do you grudge me consolation? "Thank you, dear Miss Prior. Another cup, and plenty of cream, if you please." Of course, Lady Baker was not at table when I said, "Dear Miss Prior," at breakfast. Before her Ladyship I was as mum as a mouse. Elizabeth found occasion to whisper to me during the day in her demure way: "This is a very rare occasion. Lady B—— never allows me to breakfast alone with Mr. Lovel, but has taken her extra nap, I suppose, because you and Mr. and Mrs. Biddlecombe were here."

Now it may be that one of the double doors of the room which I inhabited was occasionally open, and that Mr. Batchelor's eyes and ears are uncommonly quick, and note a number of things which less observant persons would never regard or discover; but out of this room, which I occupied for some few days, now and subsequently, I looked forth as from a little ambush upon the proceedings of the house, and got a queer little insight into the history and characters of the personages round about me. The two grandmothers of Lovel's children were domineering over that easy gentleman, as women—not grandmothers merely, but sisters, wives, aunts, daughters, when the chance is given them—will domineer. Ah! Glorvina, what a grey mare you might have become had you chosen Mr. Batchelor for your consort! (But this I only remark with a parenthetic sigh.) The two children had taken each the side of a grandmamma, and whilst Master Pop was declared by his maternal grandmother to be a Baker all over, and taught to despise sugar-baking and trade, little Cecilia was Mrs. Bonnington's

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favourite, repeated Watts's hymns with fervent precocity; declared that she would marry none but a clergyman; preached infantine sermons to her brother and maid about worldliness; and somewhat wearied me, if the truth must be told, by the intense self-respect with which she regarded her own virtues. The old ladies had that love for each other, which one may imagine that their relative positions would engender. Over the bleeding and helpless bodies of Lovel and his worthy and kind stepfather, Mr. Bonnington, they skirmished and fired shots at each other. Lady B—— would give hints about second marriages, and second families, and so forth, which of course made Mrs. Bonnington wince. Mrs. B—— had the better of Lady Baker, in consequence of the latter's notorious pecuniary irregularities. *She* had never had recourse to her son's purse, she could thank Heaven. She was not afraid of meeting any tradesman in Putney or London: she had never been ordered out of the house in the late Cecilia's lifetime; *she* could go to Boulogne and enjoy the *fresh air* there. This was the terrific whip she had over Baker. Lady B——, I regret to say, in consequence of the failure of remittances, had been locked up in prison, just at a time when she was in a state of violent quarrel with her late daughter, and good Mr. Bonnington had helped her out of durance. How did I know this? Bedford, Lovel's factotum, told me: and how the old ladies were fighting like two cats.

There was one point on which the two ladies agreed. A very wealthy widower, young still, good-looking, and good-tempered, we know can sometimes find a dear woman to console his loneliness, and protect his motherless children. From the neighbouring Heath, from Wimbledon, Roehampton, Barnes, Mortlake, Richmond, Esher, Walton, Windsor, nay, Reading, Bath, Exeter, and Penzance itself, or from any other quarter of Britain, over which your fancy may please to travel, families would have come ready with dear young girls to take charge of that man's future happiness; but it is a fact that these two dragons kept all women off from their ward. An unmarried woman, with decent good looks, was scarce ever allowed to enter Shrublands gate. If such an one appeared, Lovel's two mothers sallied out, and crunched her hapless bones. Once or twice he dared to dine with his neighbours, but the ladies led him such a life that the poor creature gave up the practice, and faintly announced his preference for home. "My dear Batch," says he, "what do I care for the dinners of the people round about? Has any one of them got a better cook or better wine than mine? When I come home from business, it is an intolerable nuisance to have to dress and go out seven or eight miles to cold *entrées*, and loaded claret, and sweet port. I can't stand it, sir. I *won't* stand

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it" (and he stamps his foot in a resolute manner). "Give me an easy life, a wine-merchant I can trust, and my own friends, by my own fireside. Shall we have some more? We can manage another bottle among us three, Mr. Bonnington?"

"Well," says Mr. Bonnington, winking at the ruby goblet, "I am sure I have no objection, Frederick, to another bo——"

"Coffee is served, sir," cries Bedford, entering.

"Well—well, perhaps we have had enough," says worthy Bonnington.

"We *have* had enough; we all drink too much," says Lovel briskly. "Come in to coffee."

We go to the drawing-room. Fred and I, and the two ladies, sit down to a rubber, whilst Miss Prior plays a piece of Beethoven to a slight warbling accompaniment from Mr. Bonnington's handsome nose, who has fallen asleep over the newspaper. During our play, Bessy glides out of the room—a grey shadow. Bonnington wakens up when the tray is brought in. Lady Baker likes that good old custom: it was always the fashion at the Castle, and she takes a good glass of negus too; and so do we all; and the conversation is pretty merry, and Fred Lovel hopes I shall sleep better to-night, and is very facetious about poor Biddlecombe, and the way in which that eminent Q.C. is henpecked by his wife.

From my bachelor's room, then, on the ground-floor; or from my solitary walks in the garden, whence I could oversee many things in the house; or from Bedford's communications to me, which were very friendly, curious, and unreserved; or from my own observation, which I promise you can see as far into the millstones of life as most folk's, I grew to find the mysteries of Shrublands no longer mysterious to me; and, like another *Diable Boiteux*, had the roofs of a pretty number of the Shrublands rooms taken off for me.

For instance, on that very first day of my stay, whilst the family were attiring themselves for dinner, I chanced to find two secret cupboards of the house unlocked, and the contents unveiled to me. Pinhorn, the children's maid, a giddy little flirting thing in a pink ribbon, brought some articles of the toilette into my worship's apartment, and as she retired did not shut the door behind her. I might have thought that pert little head had never been made to ache by any care; but ah! black care sits behind the horseman, as Horace remarks, and not only behind the horseman, but behind the footman; and not only on the footman, but on the buxom shoulders of the lady's-maid. So with Pinhorn. You surely have remarked respecting domestic servants that they address you in a tone utterly affected and unnatural—adopting when they are

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amongst each other, voices and gestures entirely different from those which their employers see and hear. Now, this little Pinhorn, in her occasional intercourse with your humble servant, had a brisk, quick, fluttering toss of the head, and a frisky manner, no doubt capable of charming some persons. As for me, ancillary allurements have, I own, had but small temptations. If Venus brought me a bedroom candle and a jug of hot water, I should give her sixpence, and no more. Having, you see, given my all to one wom—Psha! never mind *that* old story.—Well, I daresay this little creature may have been a flirt, but I took no more notice of her than if she had been a coal-scuttle.

Now, suppose she *was* a flirt. Suppose, under a mask of levity, she hid a profound sorrow. Do you suppose she was the first woman who ever has done so? Do you suppose because she had fifteen pounds a year, her tea, sugar, and beer, and told fibs to her masters and mistresses, she had not a heart? She went out of the room, absolutely coaxing and leering at me as she departed, with a great counterpane over her arm; but in the next apartment I heard her voice quite changed, and another changed voice too—though not so much altered—interrogating her. My friend Dick Bedford's voice, in addressing those whom Fortune had pleased to make his superiors, was gruff and brief. He seemed to be anxious to deliver himself of his speech to you as quickly as possible; and his tone always seemed to hint, "There—there is my message, and I have delivered it; but you know perfectly well that I am as good as you." And so he was, and so I always admitted: so even the trembling, believing, flustering, suspicious Lady Baker herself admitted, when she came into communication with this man. I have thought of this little Dick as of Swift at Sheen hard by, with Sir William Temple; or Spartacus when he was as yet the servant of the fortunate Roman gentleman who owned him. Now if Dick was intelligent, obedient, useful, only not rebellious with his superiors, I should fancy that amongst his equals he was by no means pleasant company, and that most of them hated him for his arrogance, his honesty, and his scorn of them all.

But women do not always hate a man for scorning and despising them. Women do not revolt at the rudeness and arrogance of us their natural superiors. Women, if properly trained, come down to heel at the master's bidding, and lick the hand that has been often raised to hit them. I do not say that brave little Dick Bedford ever raised an actual hand to this poor serving-girl, but his tongue whipped her, his behaviour trampled on her, and she cried, and came to him whenever he lifted a finger. Psha! Don't tell *me*. If you want a quiet, contented, orderly home, and things

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comfortable about you, that is the way you must manage your women.

Well, Bedford happens to be in the next room. It is the morning-room at Shrublands. You enter the dining-room from it, and they are in the habit of laying out the dessert there, before taking it in for dinner. Bedford is laying out his dessert as Pinhorn enters from my chamber, and he begins upon her with a sarcastic sort of grunt, and a "Ho! suppose you've been making up to B., have you?"

"Oh, Mr. Bedford, *you* know very well who it is I cares for!" she says, with a sigh.

"Bother!" Mr. B. remarks.

"Well, Richard, then!" (here she weeps).

"Leave go my 'and!—leave go my a-hand, I say!" (What *could* she have been doing to cause this exclamation?)

"Oh, Richard, it's not your *'and* I want—it's your ah-ah-art, Richard!"

"Mary Pinhorn," exclaims the other, "what's the use of going on with this game? You know we couldn't be a-happy together—you know your ideers ain't no good, Mary. It ain't your fault. *I* don't blame you for it, my dear. Some people are born clever, some are born tall: I ain't tall."

"Oh, you're tall enough for me, Richard!"

Here Richard again found occasion to cry out: "*Don't*, I say! Suppose Baker was to come in and find you squeezing of my hand in this way? I say, some people are born with big brains, Miss Pinhorn, and some with big figures. Look at that ass, Bulkeley, Lady B.'s man! He is as big as a Lifeguardsman, and he has no more education, nor no more ideas, than the beef he feeds on."

"La! Richard, whathever do you mean?"

"Pooh! How should *you* know what I mean? Lay them books straight. Put the volumes together, stupid! and the papers, and get the table ready for nursery tea, and don't go on there mopping your eyes, and making a fool of yourself, Mary Pinhorn!"

"Oh, your heart is a stone—a stone—a stone!" cries Mary, in a burst of tears. "And I wish it was hung round my neck, and I was at the bottom of the well, and—there's the hupstairs bell!" with which signal I suppose Mary disappeared, for I only heard a sort of grunt from Mr. Bedford; then the clatter of a dish or two, the wheeling of chairs and furniture, and then came a brief silence, which lasted until the entry of Dick's subordinate, Buttons, who laid the table for the children's and Miss Prior's tea.

So here was an old story told over again. Here was love unrequited, and a little passionate heart wounded and unhappy. My

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"WHERE THE SUGAR GOES"

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poor little Mary! As I am a sinner, I will give thee a crown when I go away, and not a couple of shillings, as my wont has been. Five shillings will not console thee much, but they will console thee a little. Thou wilt not imagine that I bribe thee with any privy thought of evil? Away! "Ich habe genossen das irdische Glück —ich habe—geliebt!"

At this juncture, I suppose Mrs. Prior must have entered the apartment, for though I could not hear her noiseless step, her little cracked voice came pretty clearly to me with a "Good afternoon, Mr. Bedford! Oh, dear me! what a many—many years we have been acquainted! To think of the pretty little printer's boy who used to come to Mr. Batchelor, and see you grown such a fine man!"

Bedford. How? I'm only five foot four.

Mrs. Prior. But such a fine figure, Bedford! You are—now indeed you are! Well, you are strong and I am weak. You are well, and I am weary and faint.

Bedford. The tea's a-coming directly, Mrs. Prior.

Mrs. Prior. Could you give me a glass of water first—and perhaps a little sherry in it, please. Oh, thank you. How good it is! How it revives a poor old wretch!—and your cough, Bedford? How is your cough? I have brought you some lozenges for it—some of Sir Henry Halford's own prescribing for my dear husband, and——

Bedford (*abruptly*). I must go—never mind the cough now, Mrs. P.

Mrs. Prior. What's here? almonds and raisins, macaroons, preserved apricots, biscuits for dessert—and—la bless the man! how you sta—artled me!

Bedford. DON'T! Mrs. Prior: I beg and implore of you, keep your 'ands out of the dessert. I can't stand it. I *must* tell the governor if this game goes on.

Mrs. Prior. Ah! Mr. Bedford, it is for my poor—poor child at home; the doctor recommended her apricots. Ay, indeed, dear Bedford; he did, for her poor chest!

Bedford. And I'm blest if you haven't been at the sherry-bottle again! Oh, Mrs. P., you drive me wild—you do. I can't see Lovel put upon in this way. You know it's only last week I whopped the boy for stealing the sherry, and 'twas you done it.

Mrs. Prior (*passionately*). For a sick child, Bedford. What won't a mother do for her sick child?

Bedford. Your children's always sick. You're always taking things for 'em. I tell you, by the laws, I won't and mustn't stand it, Mrs. P.

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Mrs. Prior (*with much spirit*). Go and tell your master, Bedford, Go and tell tales of me, sir. Go and have me dismissed out of this house. Go and have my daughter dismissed out of this house, and her poor mother brought to disgrace.

Bedford. Mrs. Prior—Mrs. Prior! you *have* been a-taking the sherry. A glass I don't mind: but you've been a-bringing that bottle again.

Mrs. Prior (*whimpering*). It's for Charlotte, Bedford! my poor delicate angel of a Shatty! she's ordered it, indeed she is!

Bedford. Confound your Shatty! I can't stand it, I mustn't, and won't, Mrs. P.!

Here a noise and clatter of other persons arriving interrupted the conversation between Lovel's major-domo and the mother of the children's governess, and I presently heard Master Pop's voice saying, "You're going to tea with us, Mrs. Prior?"

Mrs. Prior. Your kind dear grandmammas have asked me, dear Master Popham.

Pop. But you'd like to go to dinner best, wouldn't you? I daresay you have doosid bad dinners at your house. Haven't you, Mrs. Prior?

Cissy. Don't say doosid. It's a naughty word, Popham!

Pop. I *will* say doosid. Doo-oo-oosid! There! And I'll say worse words too, if I please, and you hold *your* tongue. What's there for tea? jam for tea? strawberries for tea? muffins for tea? That's it: strawberries and muffins for tea. And we'll go in to dessert besides: that's prime. I say, Miss Prior!

Miss Prior. What do you say, Popham?

Pop. Shouldn't you like to go in to dessert?—there's lots of good things there,—and have wine? Only when grandmamma tells her story about—about my grandfather and King George the what-d'ye-call-'im? King George the Fourth——

Cis. Ascended the throne, 1820; died at Windsor, 1830.

Pop. Bother Windsor! Well, when she tells that story, I can tell you *that* ain't very good fun.

Cis. And it's rude of you to speak in that way of your grandmamma, Pop!

Pop. And you'll hold *your* tongue, miss! And I shall speak as I like. And I'm a man, and I don't want any of your stuff and nonsense. I say, Mary, give us the marmalade!

Cis. You have had plenty to eat, and boys oughtn't to have so much.

Pop. Boys may have what they like. Boys can eat twice as much as women. There, I don't want any more. Anybody may have the rest.

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Mrs. Prior. What nice marmalade! I know some children, my dears, who—— .

Miss Prior (*imploringly*). Mamma, I beseech you——

Mrs. Prior. I know three dear children who very—very seldom have nice marmalade and delicious cake.

Pop. I know whom you mean: you mean Augustus, and Frederick, and Fanny—your children? Well, they shall have marmalade and cake.

Cis. Oh yes, I will give them all mine.

Pop. (*who speaks, I think, as if his mouth was full*). I won't give 'em mine: but they can have another pot, you know. You have always got a basket with you; you know you have, Mrs. Prior. You had it the day you took the cold fowl.

Mrs. Prior. For the poor blind black man! Oh, how thankful he was to his dear young benefactors! He is a man and a brother, and to help him was most kind of you, dear Master Popham!

Pop. That black beggar my brother? He ain't my brother.

Mrs. Prior. No, dears, you have both the most lovely complexions in the world.

Pop. Bother complexions! I say, Mary, another pot of marmalade.

Mary. I don't know, Master Pop——

Pop. I *will* have it, I say. If you don't I'll smash everything, I will.

Cis. Oh, you naughty rude boy!

Pop. Hold your tongue, stupid! I will have it, I say.

Mrs. Prior. Do humour him, Mary, please. And I'm sure my dear children at home will be better for it.

Pop. There's your basket. Now put this cake in, and this bit of butter, and this sugar on the top of the butter. Hurray! hurray! Oh, what jolly fun! Here's some cake—no, I think I'll keep that; and, Mrs. Prior, tell Gus, and Fanny, and Fred I sent it to 'em, and they shall never want for anything as long as Frederick Popham Baker Lovel, Esquire, can give it them. Did Gus like my grey greatcoat that I didn't want?

Miss Prior. You did not give him your new greatcoat?

Pop. It was beastly ugly, and I did give it him; and I'll give him this if I choose. And don't you speak to me; I'm going to school, and I ain't going to have no governesses soon.

Mrs. Prior. Ah, dear child! what a nice coat it is; and how well my boy looks in it!

Miss Prior. Mother, mother! I implore you—mother——

Mr. Lovel enters. So the children at high tea! How d'ye do,

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Mrs. Prior? I think we shall be able to manage that little matter for your second boy, Mrs. Prior.

Mrs. Prior. Heaven bless you, — bless you, my dear kind benefactor! Don't prevent me, Elizabeth: I *must* kiss his hand. There!

And here the second bell rings, and I enter the morning-room, and can see Mrs. Prior's great basket popped cunningly under the table-cloth. Her basket?—her *porte-manteau*, her *porte-bouteille*, her *porte-gâteau*, her *porte-pantalon*, her *porte-butin* in general. Thus I could see that every day Mrs. Prior visited Shrublands she gleaned greedily of the harvest. Well, Boaz was rich, and this ruthless Ruth was hungry and poor.

At the welcome summons of the second bell, Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington also made their appearance; the latter in the new cap which Mrs. Prior had admired, and which she saluted with a nod of smiling recognition: "Dear madam, it *is* lovely—I told you it was," whispers Mrs. P., and the wearer of the blue ribbons turned her bonny good-natured face towards the looking-glass, and I hope saw no reason to doubt Mrs. Prior's sincerity. As for Bonnington, I could perceive that he had been taking a little nap before dinner,—a practice by which the appetite is improved, I think, and the intellect prepared for the bland prandial conversation.

"Have the children been quite good?" asks papa of the governess.

"There are worse children, sir," says Miss Prior meekly.

"Make haste and have your dinner; we are coming in to dessert!" cries Pop.

"You would not have us go to dine without your grandmother?" papa asks. Dine without Lady Baker, indeed! I should have liked to see him go to dinner without Lady Baker.

Pending her Ladyship's arrival, papa and Mr. Bonnington walk to the open window, and gaze on the lawn and the towers of Putney rising over the wall.

"Ah, my good Mrs. Prior," cries Mrs. Bonnington, "those grandchildren of mine are sadly spoiled."

"Not by *you*, dear madam," says Mrs. Prior, with a look of commiseration. "Your dear children at home are, I am sure, perfect models of goodness. Is Master Edward well, ma'am? and Master Robert, and Master Richard, and dear funny little Master William? Ah, what blessings those children are to you! If a certain wilful little nephew of theirs took after them!"

"The little naughty wretch!" cried Mrs. Bonnington; "do you know, Prior, my grandson Frederick—(I don't know why they call him Popham in this house, or why he should be ashamed of his

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father's name)—do you know that Popham spilt the ink over my dear husband's bands, which he keeps in his great dictionary, and fought with my Richard, who is three years older than Popham, and actually beat his own uncle!"

"Gracious goodness!" I cried; "you don't mean to say, ma'am, that Pop has been laying violent hands upon his venerable relative?" I feel ever so gentle a pull at my coat. Was it Miss Prior who warned me not to indulge in the sarcastic method with good Mrs. Bonnington?

"I don't know why you call my poor child a venerable relative," Mrs. B. remarks. "I know that Popham was very rude to him: and then Robert came to his brother, and that graceless little Popham took a stick, and my husband came out, and do you know Popham Lovel actually kicked Mr. Bonnington on the shins, and butted him like a little naughty ram; and if you think such conduct is a subject for ridicule—I *don't*, Mr. Batchelor."

"My dear—dear lady!" I cried, seizing her hand; for she was going to cry, and in woman's eye the unanswerable tear always raises a deuce of a commotion in my mind. "I would not for the world say a word that should willingly vex you; and as for Popham, I give you my honour, I think nothing would do that child so much good as a good whipping."

"He is spoiled, madam; we know by *whom*," says Mrs. Prior. "Dear Lady Baker! how that red does become your Ladyship!" In fact, Lady B. sailed in at this juncture, arrayed in ribbons of scarlet; with many brooches, bangles, and other gimcracks ornamenting her plenteous person. And now her Ladyship having arrived, Bedford announced that dinner was served, and Lovel gave his mother-in-law an arm, whilst I offered mine to Mrs. Bonnington to lead her to the adjoining dining-room. And the placable kind soul speedily made peace with me. And we ate and drank of Lovel's best. And Lady Baker told us her celebrated anecdote of George the Fourth's compliment to her late dear husband, Sir Popham, when his Majesty visited Ireland. Mrs. Prior and her basket were gone when we repaired to the drawing-room: having been hunting all day, the hungry mother had returned with her prey to her wide-mouthed birdikins. Elizabeth looked very pale and handsome, reading at her lamp. And whist and the little tray finished the second day at Shrublands.

I paced the moonlit walk alone when the family had gone to rest; and smoked my cigar under the tranquil stars. I had been some thirty hours in the house, and what a queer little drama was unfolding itself before me! What struggles and passions were going on here—what *certamina* and *motus animorum!* Here was

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Lovel, this willing horse; and what a crowd of relations, what a heap of luggage had the honest fellow to carry! How that little Mrs. Prior was working, and scheming, and tacking, and flattering, and fawning, and plundering, to be sure! And that serene Elizabeth, with what consummate skill, art, and prudence had she to act, to keep her place with two such rivals reigning over her! And Elizabeth not only kept her place, but she actually was liked by those two women! Why, Elizabeth Prior, my wonder and respect for thee increase with every hour during which I contemplate thy character! How is it that you live with those lionesses, and are not torn to pieces? What sops of flattery do you cast to them to appease them? Perhaps I do not think my Elizabeth brings up her two children very well, and, indeed, have seldom become acquainted with young people more odious. But is the fault hers, or is it Fortune's spite? How, with these two grandmothers spoiling the children alternately, can the governess do better than she does? How has she managed to lull their natural jealousy? I will work out that intricate problem, that I will, ere many days are over. And there are other mysteries which I perceive. There is poor Mary breaking her heart for the butler. That butler, why does he connive at the rogueries of Mrs. Prior? Ha! herein lies a mystery too; and I vow I will penetrate it ere long. So saying, I fling away the butt-end of the fragrant companion of my solitude, and enter into my room by the open French window just as Bedford walks in at the door. I had heard the voice of that worthy domestic warbling a grave melody from his pantry window as I paced the lawn. When the family goes to rest, Bedford passes a couple of hours in study in his pantry, perusing the newspapers and the new works, and forming his opinion on books and politics. Indeed, I have reason to believe that the letters in the *Putney Herald and Mortlake Monitor*, signed "A Voice from the Basement," were Mr. Bedford's composition.

"Come to see all safe for the night, sir, and the windows closed before you turn in," Mr. Dick remarks. "Best not leave 'em open even if you are asleep inside—catch cold—many bad people about. Remember Bromley murder!—Enter at French windows—you cry out—cut your throat—and there's a fine paragraph for papers next morning!"

"What a good voice you have, Bedford!" I say; "I heard you warbling just now—a famous bass, on my word!"

"Always fond of music—sing when I'm cleaning my plate—learned in old Beak Street. *She* used to teach me," and he points towards the upper floors.

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"What a little chap you were then!—when you came for my proofs for the *Museum*," I remark.

"I ain't a very big one now, sir; but it ain't the big ones that do the best work," remarks the butler.

"I remember Miss Prior saying that you were as old as she was."

"Hm! and I scarce came up to her—eh—elbow." (Bedford had constantly to do battle with the aspirates. He conquered them, but you could see there was a struggle.)

"And it was Miss Prior taught you to sing?" I say, looking him full in the face.

He dropped his eyes—he could not bear my scrutiny. I knew the whole story now.

"When Mrs. Lovel died at Naples, Miss Prior brought home the children, and you acted as courier to the whole party?"

"Yes, sir," says Bedford. "We had the carriage, and of course poor Mrs. L. was sent home by sea, and I brought home the young ones, and—and the rest of the family. I could say, Avanti! avanti! to the Italian postillions, and ask for des chevaux when we crossed the Halps—the Alps,—I beg your pardon, sir."

"And you used to see the party to their rooms at the inns, and call them up in the morning, and you had a blunderbuss in the rumble to shoot the robbers?"

"Yes," says Bedford.

"And it was a pleasant time?"

"Yes," says Bedford, groaning and hanging down his miserable head. "Oh yes, it was a pleasant time."

He turned away; he stamped his foot; he gave a sort of imprecation; he pretended to look at some books, and dust them with a napkin which he carried. I saw the matter at once. "Poor Dick!" says I.

"It's the old—old story," says Dick. "It's you and the Hirish girl over again, sir. I'm only a servant, I know; but I'm a——. Confound it!" And here he stuck his fists into his eyes.

"And this is the reason you allow old Mrs. Prior to steal the sherry and the sugar?" I ask.

"How do you know that?—you remember how she prigged in Beak Street?" asks Bedford fiercely.

"I overheard you and her just before dinner," I said.

"You had better go and tell Lovel—have me turned out of the house. That's the best thing that can be done," cries Bedford again fiercely, stamping his feet.

"It is always my custom to do as much mischief as I possibly can, Dick Bedford," I say, with fine irony.

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He seizes my hand. "No, you're a trump—everybody knows that; beg pardon, sir; but you see I'm so—so—dash!—miserable, that I hardly know whether I'm walking on my head or my heels."

"You haven't succeeded in touching her heart, then, my poor Dick?" I said.

Dick shook his head. "She has no heart," he said. "If she ever had any, that fellar in India took it away with him. She don't care for anybody alive. She likes me as well as any one. I think she appreciates me, you see, sir; she can't 'elp it—I'm blest if she can. She knows I am a better man than most of the chaps that come down here,—I am, if I wasn't a servant. If I were only an apothecary—like that grinning jackass who comes here from Barnes in his gig, and wants to marry her—she'd have me. She keeps him on, and encourages him—she can do that cleverly enough. And the old dragon fancies she is fond of him. Psha! Why am I making a fool of myself?—I am only a servant. Mary's good enough for me; *she'll* have me fast enough. I beg your pardon, sir; I am making a fool of myself; I ain't the first, sir. Good night, sir; hope you'll sleep well." And Dick departs to his pantry and his private cares, and I think, "Here is another victim who is writhing under the merciless arrows of the universal torturer."

"He is a very singular person," Miss Prior remarked to me, as, next day, I happened to be walking on Putney Heath by her side, while her young charges trotted on and quarrelled in the distance. "I wonder where the world will stop next, dear Mr. Batchelor, and how far the march of intellect will proceed! Any one so free, and easy, and cool, as this Mr. Bedford, I never saw. When we were abroad with poor Mrs. Lovel, he picked up French and Italian in quite a surprising way. He takes books down from the library now: the most abstruse works—works that *I* couldn't pretend to read, I'm sure. Mr. Bonnington says he has taught himself history, and Horace in Latin, and algebra, and I don't know what besides. He talked to the servants and tradespeople at Naples much better than *I* could, I assure you." And Elizabeth tosses up her head heavenwards, as if she would ask of yonder skies how such a man could possibly be as good as herself.

She stepped along the Heath—slim, stately, healthy, tall—her firm neat foot treading swiftly over the grass. She wore her blue spectacles, but I think she could have looked at the sun without the glasses and without wincing. That sun was playing with her tawny wavy ringlets, and scattering gold-dust over them.

"It is wonderful," said I, admiring her, "how these people give themselves airs, and try to imitate their betters!"

"Most extraordinary!" says Bessy. She had not one particle

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of humour in all her composition. I think Dick Bedford was right; and she had no heart. Well, she had famous lungs, health, appetite, and with these one may get through life not uncomfortably.

"You and Saint Cecilia got on pretty well, Bessy?" I ask.

"Saint who?"

"The late Mrs. L."

"Oh, Mrs. Lovel:—yes. What an odd person you are! I did not understand whom you meant," says Elizabeth the downright.

"Not a good temper, I should think! She and Fred fought?"

"*He* never fought."

"I think a little bird has told me that she was not averse to the admiration of our sex?"

"I don't speak ill of my friends, Mr. Batchelor," replies Elizabeth the prudent.

"You must have difficult work with the two old ladies at Shrublands?"

Bessy shrugs her shoulders. "A little management is necessary in all families," she says. "The ladies are naturally a little jealous one of the other; but they are both of them not unkind to me in the main; and I have to bear no more than other women in my situation. It was not all pleasure at St. Boniface, Mr. Batchelor, with my uncle and aunt. I suppose all governesses have their difficulties! and I must get over mine as best I can, and be thankful for the liberal salary which your kindness procured for me, and which enables me to help my poor mother and my brothers and sisters."

"I suppose you give all your money to her?"

"Nearly all. They must have it; poor mamma has so many mouths to feed."

"And notre petit cœur, Bessy?" I ask, looking in her fresh face. "Have we replaced the Indian officer?"

Another shrug of the shoulders. "I suppose we all get over those follies, Mr. Batchelor. I remember somebody else was in a sad way too,"—and she looks askance at the victim of Glorvina. "*My* folly is dead and buried long ago. I have to work so hard for mamma, and my brothers and sisters, that I have no time for such nonsense."

Here a gentleman in a natty gig, with a high-trotting horse, came spanking towards us over the common, and with my profound knowledge of human nature, I saw at once that the servant by the driver's side was a little doctor's boy, and the gentleman himself was a neat and trim general practitioner.

He stared at me grimly, as he made a bow to Miss Bessy. I saw jealousy and suspicion in his aspect.

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"Thank you, dear Mr. Drencher," says Bessy, "for your kindness to mamma and our children. You are going to call at Shrublands? Lady Baker was indisposed this morning. She says when she can't have Doctor Piper, there's nobody like you." And this artful one smiles blandly on Mr. Drencher.

"I have got the workhouse, and a case at Roehampton, and I shall be at Shrublands *about two,* Miss Prior," says that young Doctor, whom Bedford had called a grinning jackass. He laid an eager emphasis on the *two.* Go to! I know what two and two mean as well as most people, Mr. Drencher! Glances of rage he shot at me from out his gig. The serpents of that miserable Æsculapius unwound themselves from his rod, and were gnawing at his swollen heart!

"He has a good practice, Mr. Drencher?" I ask, sly rogue as I am.

"He is very good to mamma and our children. His practice with *them* does not profit him much," says Bessy.

"And I suppose our walk will be over before two o'clock?" remarks that slyboots who is walking with Miss Prior.

"I hope so. Why, it is our dinner-time; and this walk on the Heath does make one so hungry!" cries the governess.

"Bessy Prior," I said, "it is my belief that you no more want spectacles than a cat in the twilight." To which she replied, that I was such a strange odd man, she really could not understand me.

We were back at Shrublands at two. Of course we must not keep the children's dinner waiting: and of course Mr. Drencher drove up at five minutes past two, with his gig-horse all in a lather. I, who knew the secrets of the house, was amused to see the furious glances which Bedford darted from the sideboard, or as he served the Doctor with cutlets. Drencher, for his part, scowled at me. I, for my part, was easy, witty, pleasant, and I trust profoundly wicked and malicious. I bragged about my aristocratic friends to Lady Baker. I trumped her old-world stories about George the Fourth at Dublin with the latest dandified intelligence I had learned at the Club. That the young Doctor should be dazzled and disgusted was, I own, my wish; and I enjoyed his rage as I saw him choking with jealousy over his victuals.

But why was Lady Baker sulky with me? How came it, my fashionable stories had no effect upon that polite matron? Yesterday at dinner she had been gracious enough: and turning her back upon those poor simple Bonningtons, who knew nothing of the *beau monde* at all, had condescended to address herself specially to me several times with an "I need not tell *you,* Mr. Batchelor, that the Duchess of Dorsetshire's maiden name was De Bobus;" or, "You

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know very well that the etiquette at the Lord Lieutenant's balls, at Dublin Castle, is for the wives of baronets to"—&c. &c.

Now whence, I say, did it arise that Lady Baker, who had been kind and familiar with me on Sunday, should on Monday turn me a shoulder as cold as that lamb which I offered to carve for the family, and which remained from yesterday's quarter? I had thought of staying but two days at Shrublands. I generally am bored at country-houses. I was going away on the Monday morning, but Lovel, when he and I and the children and Miss Prior breakfasted together before he went to business, pressed me to stay so heartily and sincerely that I agreed, gladly enough, to remain. I could finish a scene or two of my tragedy at my leisure; besides, there were one or two little comedies going on in the house which inspired me with no little curiosity.

Lady Baker growled at me, then, during lunch-time. She addressed herself in whispers and hints to Mr. Drencher. She had in her own man, Bulkeley, and bullied him. She desired to know whether she was to have the barouche or not; and when informed that it was at her Ladyship's service, said it was a great deal too cold for the open carriage, and that she would have the brougham. When she was told that Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington had impounded the brougham, she said she had no idea of people taking other people's carriages: and when Mr. Bedford remarked that her Ladyship had her choice that morning, and had chosen the barouche, she said, "I didn't speak to you, sir; and I will thank you not to address me until you are spoken to!" She made the place so hot that I began to wish I had quitted it.

"And pray, Miss Prior, where is Captain Baker to sleep," she asked, "now that the ground-floor room is engaged?"

Miss Prior meekly said, "Captain Baker would have the pink room."

"The room on my landing-place, without double doors? Impossible! Clarence is always smoking. Clarence will fill the whole house with his smoke. He shall *not* sleep in the pink room. I expected the ground-floor room for him, which—a—this gentleman persists in not vacating." And the dear creature looked me full in the face.

"This gentleman smokes, too, and is so comfortable where he is, that he proposes to remain there," I say with a bland smile.

"Haspic of plovers' eggs, sir," says Bedford, handing a dish over my back. And he actually gave me a little dig, and growled, "Go it—give it her!"

"There is a capital inn on the Heath," I continue, peeling one of my opal favourites. "If Captain Baker must smoke, he may have a room there."

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"Sir! my son does not live at inns," cries Lady Baker.

"Oh, grandma! don't he, though? And wasn't there a row at the 'Star and Garter'; and didn't pa pay Uncle Clarence's bill there, though?"

"Silence, Popham! Little boys should be seen and not heard," says Cissy. "Shouldn't little boys be seen and not heard, Miss Prior?"

"They shouldn't insult their grandmothers. O my Cecilia—my Cecilia!" cries Lady Baker, lifting her hand.

"You shan't hit me! I say you shan't hit me!" roars Pop, starting back, and beginning to square at his enraged ancestress. The scene was growing painful. And there was that rascal of a Bedford choking with suppressed laughter at the sideboard. Bulkeley, her Ladyship's man, stood calm as fate; but young Buttons burst out in a guffaw; on which, I assure you, Lady Baker looked as savage as Lady Macbeth.

"Am I to be insulted by my daughter's servants?" cries Lady Baker. "I will leave the house this instant."

"At what hour will your Ladyship have the barouche?" says Bedford, with perfect gravity.

If Mr. Drencher had whipped out a lancet and bled Lady B—— on the spot, he would have done her good. I shall draw the curtain over this sad—this humiliating scene. Drop, little curtain! on this absurd little act.

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CHAPTER IV

A BLACK SHEEP

THE being for whom my friend Dick Bedford seemed to have a special contempt and aversion, was Mr. Bulkeley, the tall footman in attendance upon Lovel's dear mother-in-law. One of the causes of Bedford's wrath, the worthy fellow explained to me. In the servants' hall, Bulkeley was in the habit of speaking in disrespectful and satirical terms of his mistress, enlarging upon her many foibles, and describing her pecuniary difficulties to the many *habitués* of that second social circle at Shrublands. The hold which Mr. Bulkeley had over his lady lay in a long unsettled account of wages, which her Ladyship was quite disinclined to discharge. And, in spite of this insolvency, the footman must have found his profit in the place, for he continued to hold it from year to year, and to fatten on his earnings, such as they were. My Lady's dignity did not allow her to travel without this huge personage in her train; and a great comfort it must have been to her, to reflect that in all the country-houses which she visited (and she would go wherever she could force an invitation), her attendant freely explained himself regarding her peculiarities, and made his brother servants aware of his mistress's embarrassed condition. And yet the woman, whom I suppose no soul alive respected (unless, haply, she herself had a hankering delusion that she was a respectable woman), thought that her position in life forbade her to move abroad without a maid, and this hulking encumbrance in plush; and never was seen anywhere, in watering-place, country-house, hotel, unless she was so attended.

Between Bedford and Bulkeley, then, there was feud and mutual hatred. Bedford chafed the big man by constant sneers and sarcasms, which penetrated the other's dull hide, and caused him frequently to assert that he would punch Dick's ugly head off. The housekeeper had frequently to interpose, and fling her matronly arms between these men of war; and perhaps Bedford was forced to be still at times, for Bulkeley was nine inches taller than himself, and was perpetually bragging of his skill and feats as a bruiser. This sultan may also have wished to fling his pocket-handkerchief

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to Miss Mary Pinhorn, who, though she loved Bedford's wit and cleverness, might also be not insensible to the magnificent chest, calves, whiskers, of Mr. Bulkeley. On this delicate subject, however, I can't speak. The men hated each other. You have, no doubt, remarked in your experience of life, that when men *do* hate each other, about a woman, or some other cause, the real reason is never assigned. You say, "The conduct of such and such a man to his grandmother—his behaviour in selling that horse to Benson—his manner of brushing his hair down the middle"—or what you will, "makes him so offensive to me that I can't endure him." His verses, therefore, are mediocre; his speeches in Parliament are utter failures; his practice at the bar is dwindling every year; his powers (always small) are utterly leaving him, and he is repeating his confounded jokes until they quite nauseate. Why, only about myself, and within these three days, I read a nice little article—written in sorrow, you know, not in anger—by our eminent *confrère* Wiggins, deploring the decay of, &c. &c. And Wiggins's little article which was not found suitable for a certain Magazine?—*Allons donc!* The drunkard says the pickled salmon gave him the headache; the man who hates us gives *a* reason, but not *the* reason. Bedford was angry with Bulkeley for abusing his mistress at the servants' table? Yes. But for what else besides? I don't care—nor possibly does your worship, the exalted reader, for these low vulgar kitchen quarrels.

Out of that ground-floor room, then, I would not move in spite of the utmost efforts of my Lady Baker's broad shoulder to push me out; and with many grins that evening, Bedford complimented me on my gallantry in routing the enemy at luncheon. I think he may possibly have told his master, for Lovel looked very much alarmed and uneasy when we greeted each other on his return from the City, but became more composed when Lady Baker appeared at the second dinner-bell, without a trace on her fine countenance of that storm which had caused all her waves to heave with such commotion at noon. How finely some people, by the way, can hang up quarrels—or pop them into a drawer—as they do their work, when dinner is announced, and take them out again at a convenient season! Baker was mild, gentle, a thought sad and sentimental—tenderly interested about her dear son and daughter in Ireland, whom she *must* go and see—quite easy in hand, in a word, and to the immense relief of all of us. She kissed Lovel on retiring, and prayed blessings on her Frederick. She pointed to the picture: nothing could be more melancholy or more gracious.

"*She* go!" says Mr. Bedford to me at night—"not she. She knows when she's well off; was obliged to turn out of Bakerstown

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before she came here: that brute Bulkeley told me so. She's always quarrelling with her son and his wife. Angels don't grow everywhere as they do at Putney, Mr. B.! You gave it her well to-day at lunch, you did though!" During my stay at Shrublands, Mr. Bedford paid me a regular evening visit in my room, set the *carte du pays* before me, and in his curt way acquainted me with the characters of the inmates of the house, and the incidents occurring therein.

Captain Clarence Baker did not come to Shrublands on the day when his anxious mother wished to clear out my nest (and expel the amiable bird in it) for her son's benefit. I believe an important fight, which was to come off in the Essex Marshes, and which was postponed in consequence of the interposition of the county magistrates, was the occasion, or at any rate the pretext, of the Captain's delay. "He likes seeing fights better than going to 'em, the Captain does," my major-domo remarked. "His regiment was ordered to India, and he sold out: climate don't agree with his precious health. The Captain ain't been here ever so long, not since poor Mrs. L.'s time, before Miss P. came here: Captain Clarence and his sister had a tremendous quarrel together. He was up to all sorts of pranks, the Captain was. Not a good lot, by any means, I should say, Mr. Batchelor." And here Bedford begins to laugh. "Did you ever read, sir, a farce called 'Raising the Wind?' There's plenty of Jeremy Diddlers now, Captain Jeremy Diddlers and Lady Jeremy Diddlers too. Have you such a thing as half-a-crown about you? If you have, don't invest it in some folks' pockets—that's all. Beg your pardon, sir, if I am bothering you with talking."

As long as I was at Shrublands, and ready to partake of breakfast with my kind host and his children and their governess, Lady Baker had her own breakfast taken to her room. But when there were no visitors in the house, she would come groaning out of her bedroom to be present at the morning meal; and not uncommonly would give the little company anecdotes of the departed saint, under whose invocation, as it were, we were assembled, and whose simpering effigy looked down upon us, over her harp, and from the wall. The eyes of the portrait followed you about, as portraits' eyes so painted will; and those glances, as it seemed to me, still domineered over Lovel, and made him quail as they had done in life. Yonder, in the corner, was Cecilia's harp, with its leathern cover. I likened the skin to that drum which the dying Zisca ordered should be made out of his hide, to be beaten before the hosts of his people and inspire terror. *Vous conceves*, I did not say to Lovel at breakfast, as I sat before the ghostly musical instrument, "My dear fellow,

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that skin of Cardovan leather belonging to your defunct Cecilia's harp is like the hide which," &c.; but I confess, at first, I used to have a sort of *crawly* sensation, as of a sickly genteel ghost flitting about the place, in an exceedingly peevish humour, trying to scold and command, and finding her defunct voice couldn't be heard—trying to re-illumine her extinguished leers and faded smiles and ogles, and finding no one admired or took note. In the grey of the gloaming, in the twilight corner where stands the shrouded companion of song—what is that white figure flickering round the silent harp? Once, as we were assembled in the room at afternoon tea, a bird, entering at the open window, perched on the instrument. Popham dashed at it. Lovel was deep in conversation upon the wine duties with a Member of Parliament he had brought down to dinner. Lady Baker, who was, if I may use the expression, "jawing," as usual, and telling one of her tremendous stories about the Lord Lieutenant to Mr. Bonnington, took no note of the incident. Elizabeth did not seem to remark it: what was a bird on a harp to her, but a sparrow perched on a bit of leather-casing! All the ghosts in Putney churchyard might rattle all their bones, and would not frighten that stout spirit!

I was amused at a precaution which Bedford took, and somewhat alarmed at the distrust towards Lady Baker which he exhibited, when, one day on my return from town—whither I had made an excursion of four or five hours—I found my bedroom door locked, and Dick arrived with the key. "He's wrote to say he's coming this evening, and if he had come when you was away, Lady B. was capable of turning your things out, and putting his in, and taking her oath she believed you was going to leave. The long-bows Lady B. do pull are perfectly awful, Mr. B.! So it was long-bow to long-bow, Mr. Batchelor; and I said you had took the key in your pocket, not wishing to have your papers disturbed. She tried the lawn window, but I had bolted that, and the Captain will have the pink room, after all, and must smoke up the chimney. I should have liked to see him, or you, or any one do it in poor Mrs. L.'s time—I just should."

During my visit to London, I had chanced to meet my friend Captain Fitzb—dle, who belongs to a dozen Clubs, and knows something of every man in London. "Know anything of Clarence Baker? Of course I do," says Fitz; "and if you want any *renseignement*, my dear fellow, I have the honour to inform you that a blacker little sheep does not trot the London *pavé*. Wherever that ingenious officer's name is spoken—at Tattersall's, at his Clubs, in his late regiments, in men's society, in ladies' society, in that expanding and most agreeable circle which you may call no society

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at all—a chorus of maledictions rises up at the mention of Baker. Know anything of Clarence Baker? My dear fellow, enough to make your hair turn white, unless (as I sometimes fondly imagine) nature has already performed that process, when of course I can't pretend to act upon mere hair-dye." (The whiskers of the individual who addressed me, innocent, stared me in the face as he spoke, and were dyed of the most unblushing purple.) "Clarence Baker, sir, is a young man who would have been invaluable in Sparta as a warning against drunkenness and an exemplar of it. He has helped the regimental surgeon to some most interesting experiments in *delirium tremens*. He is known, and not in the least trusted, in every billiard-room in Brighton, Canterbury, York, Sheffield—on every pavement which has rung with the clink of dragoon boot-heels. By a wise system of revoking at whist he has lost games which have caused not only his partners, but his opponents and the whole Club, to admire him and to distrust him: long before and since he was of age, he has written his eminent name to bills which have been dishonoured, and has nobly pleaded his minority as a reason for declining to pay. From the garrison towns where he has been quartered, he has carried away not only the hearts of the milliners, but their gloves, haberdashery, and perfumery. He has had controversies with Cornet Green regarding horse transactions; disputed turf accounts with Lieutenant Brown; and betting and backgammon differences with Captain Black. From all I have heard he is the worthy son of his admirable mother. And I bet you even on the four events, if you stay three days in a country-house with him—which appears to be your present happy idea—that he will quarrel with you, insult you and apologise; that he will intoxicate himself more than once; that he will offer to play cards with you, and not pay on losing (if he wins, I perhaps need not state what his conduct will be); and that he will try to borrow money from you, and most likely from your servant, before he goes away." So saying, the sententious Fitz strutted up the steps of one of his many club-haunts in Pall Mall, and left me forewarned, and I trust forearmed, against Captain Clarence and all his works.

The adversary, when at length I came in sight of him, did not seem very formidable. I beheld a weakly little man with Chinese eyes, and pretty little feet and hands, whose pallid countenance told of Finishes and Casinos. His little chest and fingers were decorated with many jewels. A perfume of tobacco hung round him. His little moustache was twisted with an elaborate gummy curl. I perceived that the little hand which twirled the moustache shook woefully: and from the little chest there came a cough surprisingly loud and dismal.

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He was lying on a sofa as I entered, and the children of the house were playing round him. "If you are our uncle, why didn't you come to see us oftener?" asks Popham.

"How should I know that you were such uncommonly nice children?" asked the Captain.

"We're not nice to you," says Popham. "Why do you cough so? Mamma used to cough. And why does your hand shake so?"

"My hand shakes because I am ill: and I cough because I'm ill. Your mother died of it, and I daresay I shall too."

"I hope you'll be good, and repent before you die, uncle, and I will lend you some nice books," says Cecilia.

"Oh, bother books!" cries Pop.

"And I hope *you'll* be good, Popham," and "You hold *your* tongue, miss," and "I shall," and "I shan't," and "You're another," and "I'll tell Miss Prior,"—"Go and tell, telltale,"—"Boo"—"Boo"—"Boo"—Boo"—and I don't know what more exclamations came tumultuously and rapidly from these dear children, as their uncle lay before them, a handkerchief to his mouth, his little feet high raised on the sofa cushions.

Captain Baker turned a little eye towards me, as I entered the room, but did not change his easy and elegant posture. When I came near to the sofa where he reposed, he was good enough to call out—

"Glass of sherry!"

"It's Mr. Batchelor; it isn't Bedford, uncle," says Cissy.

"Mr. Batchelor ain't got any sherry in his pocket: have you, Mr. Batchelor? You ain't like old Mrs. Prior, always pocketing things, are you?" cries Pop, and falls a-laughing at the ludicrous idea of my being mistaken for Bedford.

"Beg your pardon. How should I know, you know?" drawls the invalid on the sofa. "Everybody's the same now, you see"

"Sir!" say I, and "sir" was all I could say. The fact is, I could have replied with something remarkably neat and cutting, which would have transfixed the languid little jackanapes who dared to mistake me for a footman; but, you see, I only thought of my repartee some eight hours afterwards when I was lying in bed, and I am sorry to own that a great number of my best *bonmots* have been made in that way. So, as I had not the pungent remark ready when wanted, I can't say I said it to Captain Baker, but I daresay I turned very red, and said "Sir!" and—and in fact that was all.

"You were goin' to say somethin'?" asked the Captain affably.

"You know my friend Mr. Fitzboodle, I believe?" said I; the fact is, I really did not know what to say.

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"Some mistake—think not."

"He is a member of the 'Flag Club,'" I remarked, looking my young fellow hard in the face.

"I ain't. There's a set of cads in that Club that will say anything."

"You may not know him, sir, but he seemed to know you very well. Are we to have any tea, children?" I say, flinging myself down on an easy-chair, taking up a magazine, and adopting an easy attitude, though I daresay my face was as red as a turkey-cock's, and I was boiling over with rage.

As we had a very good breakfast and a profuse luncheon at Shrublands, of course we could not support nature till dinner-time without a five-o'clock tea; and this was the meal for which I pretended to ask. Bedford, with his silver kettle, and his buttony satellite, presently brought in this refection, and of course the children bawled out to him—

"Bedford—Bedford! Uncle mistook Mr. Batchelor for you."

"I could not be mistaken for a more honest man, Pop," said I. And the bearer of the tea-urn gave me a look of gratitude and kindness which, I own, went far to restore my ruffled equanimity.

"Since you are the butler, will you get me a glass of sherry and a biscuit?" says the Captain. And Bedford retiring, returned presently with the wine.

The young gentleman's hand shook so, that in order to drink his wine, he had to surprise it, as it were, and seize it with his mouth, when a shake brought the glass near his lips. He drained the wine and held out his hand for another glass. The hand was steadier now.

"You the man who was here before?" asks the Captain.

"Six years ago, when you were here, sir," says the butler.

"What! I ain't changed, I suppose?"

"Yes, you are, sir."

"Then, how the dooce do you remember me?"

"You forgot to pay me some money you borrowed of me, one pound five, sir," says Bedford, whose eyes slyly turned in my direction.

And here, according to her wont at this meal, the dark-robed Miss Prior entered the room. She was coming forward with her ordinarily erect attitude and firm step, but paused in her walk an instant, and when she came to us, I thought, looked remarkably pale. She made a slight curtsey, and it must be confessed that Captain Baker rose up from his sofa for a moment when she appeared. She then sat down, with her back towards him, turning towards herself the table and its tea apparatus.

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At this board my Lady Baker found us assembled when she returned from her afternoon drive. She flew to her darling reprobate of a son. She took his hand, she smoothed back his hair from his damp forehead. "My darling child," cries this fond mother, "what a pulse you have got!"

"I suppose, because I've been drinking," says the prodigal.

"Why didn't you come out driving with me? The afternoon was lovely!"

"To pay visits at Richmond? Not as I knows on, ma'am," says the invalid. "Conversation with elderly ladies about poodles, Bible societies, that kind of thing? It must be a doosid lovely afternoon that would make me like that sort of game." And here comes a fit of coughing, over which mamma ejaculates her sympathy.

"Kick—kick—killin' myself!" gasps out the Captain; "know I am. No man *can* lead my life, and stand it. Dyin' by inches! Dyin' by whole yards, by Jo—ho—hove, I am!" Indeed, he was as bad in health as in morals, this graceless Captain.

"That man of Lovel's seems a d—— insolent beggar," he presently and ingenuously remarks.

"Oh, Uncle, you mustn't say those words!" cries niece Cissy.

"He's a man, and may say what he likes, and so will I, when I'm a man. Yes, and I'll say it now, too, if I like," cries Master Popham.

"Not to give me pain, Popham? Will you?" asks the governess.

On which the boy says—"Well, who wants to hurt you, Miss Prior?"

And our colloquy ends by the arrival of the man of the house from the City.

What I have admired in some dear women is their capacity for quarrelling and for reconciliation. As I saw Lady Baker hanging round her son's neck, and fondling his scanty ringlets, I remembered the awful stories with which in former days she used to entertain us regarding this reprobate. Her heart was pincushioned with his filial crimes. Under her chestnut front her Ladyship's real head of hair was grey, in consequence of his iniquities. His precocious appetite had devoured the greater part of her jointure. He had treated her many dangerous illnesses with indifference: had been the worst son, the worst brother, the most ill-conducted schoolboy, the most immoral young man—the terror of households, the Lovelace of garrison towns, the perverter of young officers; in fact, Lady Baker did not know how she supported existence at all under the agony occasioned by his crimes, and it was only from the possession

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of a more than ordinarily strong sense of religion that she was enabled to bear her burden.

The Captain himself explained these alternating maternal caresses and quarrels in his easy way.

"Saw how the old lady kissed and fondled me?" says he to his brother-in-law. "Quite refreshin', ain't it? Hang me, I thought she was goin' to send me a bit of sweetbread off her own plate. Came up to my room last night, wanted to tuck me up in bed, and abused my brother to me for an hour. You see, when I'm in favour, she always abuses Baker; when *he's* in favour she abuses me to him. And my sister-in-law, didn't she give it my sister-in-law! Oh! I'll trouble you. And poor Cecilia—why, hang me, Mr. Batchelor, she used to go on—this bottle's corked, I'm hanged if it isn't—to go on about Cecilia, and call her——Hullo!"

Here he was interrupted by our host, who said sternly—

"Will you please to forget those quarrels, or not mention them here? Will you have more wine, Batchelor?"

And Lovel rises, and haughtily stalks out of the room. To do Lovel justice, he had a great contempt and dislike for his young brother-in-law, which, with his best magnanimity, he could not at all times conceal.

So our host stalks towards the drawing-room, leaving Captain Clarence sipping wine.

"Don't go too," says the Captain. "He's a confounded rum fellow, my brother-in-law is. He's a confounded ill-conditioned fellow too. They always are, you know, these tradesmen fellows, these half-bred 'uns. I used to tell my sister so; but she *would* have him, because he had such lots of money, you know. And she threw over a fellar she was very fond of; and I told her she'd regret it. I told Lady B. she'd regret it. It was all Lady B.'s doing. She made Cissy throw the fellar over. He was a bad match, certainly, Tom Mountain was; and not a clever fellow, you know, or that sort of thing; but, at any rate, he was a gentleman, and better than a confounded sugar-baking beggar out of Ratcliff Highway."

"You seem to find that claret very good," I remark, speaking, I may say, Socratically, to my young friend, who had been swallowing bumper after bumper.

"Claret good? Yes, doosid good!"

"Well, you see our confounded sugar-baker gives you his best."

"And why shouldn't he, hang him? Why, the fellow chokes with money. What does it matter to him how much he spends? You're a poor man, I daresay. You don't look as if you were overflush of money. Well, if *you* stood a good dinner, it would be

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all right—I mean it would show—you understand me, you know. But a sugar-baker with ten thousand a year, what does it matter to him, bottle of claret more—less?"

"Let us go in to the ladies," I say.

"Go in to mother! *I* don't want to go in to my mother," cries out the artless youth. "And I don't want to go in to the sugar-baker, hang him! and I don't want to go in to the children; and I'd rather have a glass of brandy-and-water with you, old boy. Here you! What's your name? Bedford! I owe you five-and-twenty shillings, do I, old Bedford? Give us a glass of Schnapps, and I'll pay you! Look here, Batchelor. I hate that sugar-baker. Two years ago, I drew a bill on him, and he wouldn't pay it—perhaps he would have paid it, but my sister wouldn't let him. And, I say, shall we go and have a cigar in your room? My mother's been abusing you to me like fun this morning. She abuses everybody. She used to abuse Cissy. Cissy used to abuse her—used to fight like two cats——"

And if I narrate this conversation, dear Spartan youth! if I show thee this Helot maundering in his cups, it is that from his odious example thou may'st learn to be moderate in the use of thine own. Has the enemy who has entered thy mouth ever stolen away thy brains? Has wine ever caused thee to blab secrets; to utter egotisms and follies? Beware of it. Has it ever been thy friend at the end of the hard day's work, the cheery companion of thy companions, the promoter of harmony, kindness, harmless social pleasure? Be thankful for it. Three years since, when the comet was blazing in the autumnal sky, I stood on the château-steps of a great claret proprietor. "Boirai-je de ton vin, O comète?" I said, addressing the luminary with the flaming tail. "Shall those generous bunches which you ripen yield their juices for me *moriturо?*" It was a solemn thought. Ah! my dear brethren! who knows the Order of the Fates? When shall we pass the Gloomy Gates? Which of us goes, which of us waits to drink those famous Fifty-eights? A sermon, upon my word! And pray why not a little homily on an autumn eve over a purple cluster? . . . If that rickety boy had only drunk claret, I warrant you his tongue would not have blabbed, his hand would not have shaken, his wretched little brain and body would not have reeled with fever.

"'Gad," said he next day to me, "cut again last night. Have an idea that I abused Lovel. When I have a little wine on board, always speak my mind, don't you know? Last time I was here in my poor sister's time, said somethin' to her, don't quite know what it was, somethin' confoundedly true and unpleasant I daresay. I think it was about a fellow she used to go on with before she

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married the sugar-baker. And I got orders to quit, by Jove, sir—neck and crop, sir, and no mistake! And we gave it one another over the stairs. Oh, my! we did pitch in!—and that was the last time I ever saw Cecilia—give you my word. A doosid unforgiving woman my poor sister was, and between you and me, Batchelor, as great a flirt as ever threw a fellar over. You should have heard her and my Lady B. go on, that's all!—Well, mamma, are you going out for a drive in the coachy-poachy?—Not as I knows on, thank you, as I before had the honour to observe. Mr. Batchelor and me are going to play a little game at billiards." We did, and I won; and, from that day to this, have never been paid my little winnings.

On the day after the doughty Captain's arrival, Miss Prior, in whose face I had remarked a great expression of gloom and care, neither made her appearance at breakfast nor at the children's dinner. "Miss Prior was a little unwell," Lady Baker said, with an air of most perfect satisfaction. "Mr. Drencher will come to see her this afternoon, and prescribe for her, I daresay," adds her Ladyship, nodding and winking a roguish eye at me. I was at a loss to understand what was the point of humour which amused Lady B., until she herself explained it.

"My good sir," she said, "I think Miss Prior is not at all *averse* to being ill." And the nods recommenced.

"As how?" I ask.

"To being ill, or at least to calling in the medical man."

"Attachment between governess and Sawbones I make bold for to presume?" says the Captain.

"Precisely, Clarence—a very fitting match. I saw the affair, even before Miss Prior owned it—that is to say, she has not denied it. She says she can't afford to marry, that she has children enough at home in her brothers and sisters. She is a well-principled young woman, and does credit, Mr. Batchelor, to your recommendation, and the education she has received from her uncle, the Master of St. Boniface."

"Cissy to school; Pop to Eton; and Miss What-d'you-call to grind the pestle in Sawbones's back-shop: I see!" says Captain Clarence. "He seems a low vulgar blackguard, that Sawbones."

"Of course, my love, what can you expect from that sort of person?" asks mamma, whose own father was a small attorney in a small Irish town.

"I wish I had his confounded good health," cries Clarence, coughing.

"My poor darling!" says mamma.

I said nothing. And so Elizabeth was engaged to that great

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broad-shouldered, red-whiskered young surgeon with the huge appetite and the dubious *h*'s! Well, why not? What was it to me? Why shouldn't she marry him? Was he not an honest man, and a fitting match for her? Yes. Very good. Only if I *do* love a bird or flower to glad me with its dark blue eye, it is the first to fade away. If I *have* a partiality for a young gazelle, it is the first to——psha! What have I to do with this namby-pamby? Can the heart that has truly loved ever forget, and doesn't it as truly love on to the——stuff! I am past the age of such follies. I might have made a woman happy: I think I should. But the fugacious years have lapsed, my Posthumus! My waist is now a good bit wider than my chest, and it is decreed that I shall be alone!

My tone, then, when next I saw Elizabeth, was sorrowful—not angry. Drencher, the young doctor, came punctually enough, you may be sure, to look after his patient. Little Pinhorn, the children's maid, led the young practitioner smiling towards the schoolroom regions. His creaking highlows sprang swiftly up the stairs. I happened to be in the hall, and surveyed him with a grim pleasure. "Now he is in the schoolroom," I thought. "Now he is taking her hand—it is very white—and feeling her pulse. And so on, and so on. Surely, surely, Pinhorn remains in the room?" I am sitting on a hall-table as I muse plaintively on these things, and gaze up the stairs by which the Hakeem (great carroty-whiskered cad!) has passed into the sacred precincts of the harem. As I gaze up the stair, another door opens into the hall; a scowling face peeps through that door, and looks up the stair, too. 'Tis Bedford, who has slid out of his pantry, and watches the doctor. And thou, too, my poor Bedford! Oh! the whole world throbs with vain heart-pangs, and tosses and heaves with longing unfulfilled desires! All night, and all over the world, bitter tears are dropping as regular as the dew, and cruel memories are haunting the pillow. Close my hot eyes, kind Sleep! Do not visit it, dear delusive images out of the Past! Often your figure shimmers through my dreams, Glorvina. Not as you are now, the stout mother of many children—you always had an alarming likeness to your own mother, Glorvina—but as you were—slim, black-haired, blue-eyed—when your carnation lips warbled the "Vale of Avoca" or the "Angel's Whisper." "What!" I say then, looking up the stair, "am I absolutely growing jealous of yon apothecary?—O fool!" And at this juncture, out peers Bedford's face from the pantry, and I see he is jealous too. I tie my shoe as I sit on the table; I don't affect to notice Bedford in the least (who, in fact, pops his own head back again as soon as he sees mine). I take my wideawake from the peg, set it on one side of my head, and strut whistling

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out of the hall-door. I stretch over Putney Heath, and my spirit resumes its tranquillity.

I sometimes keep a little journal of my proceedings, and on referring to its pages, the scene rises before me pretty clearly to which the brief notes allude. On this day I find noted:—

"*Friday, July* 14.

"B. came down to-day. Seems to require a great deal of attendance from Dr. ——. Row between dowagers after dinner."

"B.," I need not remark, is Bessy. "Dr.," of course, you know. "Row between dowagers" means a battle royal between Mrs. Bonnington and Lady Baker, such as not unfrequently raged under the kindly Lovel's roof.

Lady Baker's gigantic menial Bulkeley condescended to wait at the family dinner at Shrublands, when perforce he had to put himself under Mr. Bedford's orders. Bedford would gladly have dispensed with the London footman, over whose calves, he said, he and his boy were always tumbling; but Lady Baker's dignity would not allow her to part from her own man; and her good-natured son-in-law allowed her, and indeed almost all other persons, to have their own way. I have reason to fear Mr. Bulkeley's morals were loose. Mrs. Bonnington had a special horror of him; his behaviour in the village public-houses, where his powder and plush were for ever visible—his freedom of conduct and conversation before the good lady's nurse and parlour-maids—provoked her anger and suspicion. More than once, she whispered to me her loathing of this flour-besprinkled monster; and, as much as such a gentle creature could, she showed her dislike to him by her behaviour. The flunkey's solemn equanimity was not to be disturbed by any such feeble indications of displeasure. From his powdered height, he looked down upon Mrs. Bonnington, and her esteem or her dislike was beneath him.

Now on this Friday night the 14th, Captain Clarence had gone to pass the day in town, and our Bessy made her appearance again, the Doctor's prescriptions having, I suppose, agreed with her. Mr. Bulkeley, who was handing coffee to the ladies, chose to offer none to Miss Prior, and I was amused when I saw Bedford's heel scrunch down on the flunkey's right foot, as he pointed towards the governess. The oaths which Bulkeley had to devour in silence must have been frightful. To do the gallant fellow justice, I think he would have died rather than speak before company in a drawing-room. He limped up and offered the refreshment to the young lady, who bowed and declined it.

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"Frederick," Mrs. Bonnington begins, when the coffee ceremony is over, "now the servants are gone, I must scold you about the waste at your table, my dear. What was the need of opening that great bottle of champagne? Lady Baker only takes two glasses. Mr. Batchelor doesn't touch it." (No, thank you, my dear Mrs. Bonnington: too old a stager.) "Why not have a little bottle instead of that great, large, immense one? Bedford is a teetotaller. I suppose it is *that London footman who likes it.*"

"My dear mother, I haven't really ascertained his tastes," says Lovel.

"Then why not tell Bedford to open a pint, dear?" pursues mamma.

"Oh, Bedford — Bedford, we must not mention *him*, Mrs. Bonnington!" cries Lady Baker. "Bedford is faultless. Bedford has the keys of everything. Bedford is not to be controlled in anything. Bedford is to be at liberty to be rude to my servant."

"Bedford was admirably kind in his attendance on your daughter, Lady Baker," says Lovel, his brow darkening; "and as for your man, I should think he was big enough to protect himself from any rudeness of poor Dick!" The good fellow had been angry for one moment, at the next he was all for peace and conciliation.

Lady Baker puts on her superfine air. With that air she had often awe-stricken good simple Mrs. Bonnington; and she loved to use it whenever City folk or humble people were present. You see she thought herself your superior and mine, as *de par le monde* there are many artless Lady Bakers who do. "My dear Frederick!" says Lady B. then, putting on her best Mayfair manner, "excuse me for saying, but you don't know the—the class of servant to which Bulkeley belongs. I had him as a great favour from Lord Toddleby's. That—that class of servant is not generally accustomed to go out single."

"Unless they are two behind a carriage-perch they pine away, I suppose," remarks Mr. Lovel, "as one love-bird does without his mate."

"No doubt—no doubt," says Lady B., who does not in the least understand him; "I only say you are not accustomed here—in this kind of establishment, you understand—to that class of——"

But here Mrs. Bonnington could contain her wrath no more. "Lady Baker!" cries that injured mother, "is my son's establishment not good enough for any powdered wretch in England? Is the house of a British merchant——"

"My dear creature—my dear creature!" interposes her Lady-

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ship, "it *is* the house of a British merchant, and a most comfortable house too."

"Yes, *as you find it*," remarks mamma.

"Yes, as I find it, when I come to take care of that *departed angel's children*, Mrs. Bonnington!"—(Lady B. here indicates the Cecilian effigy)—"of that dear seraph's orphans, Mrs. Bonnington! *You* cannot. You have other duties—other children—a husband, whom you have left at home in delicate health, and who——"

"Lady Baker!" exclaims Mrs. Bonnington, "no one shall say I don't take care of my dear husband!"

"My dear Lady Baker!—my dear—dear mother!" cries Lovel, *éploré*, and whimpers aside to me, "They spar in this way every night, when we're alone. It's too bad, ain't it, Batch?"

"I say you *do* take care of Mr. Bonnington," Baker blandly resumes (she has hit Mrs. Bonnington on the raw place, and smilingly proceeds to thong again): "I say you *do* take care of your husband, my dear creature, and that is why you can't attend to Frederick! And as he is of a very easy temper,—except sometimes with his poor Cecilia's mother,—he allows all his tradesmen to cheat him; all his servants to cheat him; Bedford to be rude to everybody; and if to me, why not to my servant Bulkeley, with whom Lord Toddleby's groom of the chambers gave me the very highest character?"

Mrs. Bonnington in a great flurry broke in by saying she was surprised to hear that noblemen *had* grooms in their chambers: and she thought they were much better in the stables: and when they dined with Captain Huff, you know, Frederick, *his* man always brought such a dreadful smell of the stable in with him, that—— Here she paused. Baker's eye was on her; and that dowager was grinning a cruel triumph.

"He!—he! You mistake, my good Mrs. Bonnington!" says her Ladyship. "Your poor mother mistakes, my dear Frederick. You have lived in a quiet and most respectable sphere, but not, you understand, not——"

"Not what, pray, Lady Baker? We have lived in this neighbourhood twenty years: in my late husband's time, when *we saw a great deal of company*, and this dear Frederick was a boy at Westminster School. And we have *paid* for everything we have had for twenty years; and we have not owed a penny to any *tradesman*. And we may not have had *powdered footmen*, six feet high, impertinent beasts, who were rude to all the maids in the place. Don't—I *will* speak, Frederick! But servants who loved us, and who were *paid their wages*, and who—o—ho—ho—ho!"

Wipe your eyes, dear friends! out with all your pocket-

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handkerchiefs. I protest I cannot bear to see a woman in distress. Of course Fred Lovel runs to console his dear old mother, and vows Lady Baker meant no harm.

"Meant harm! My dear Frederick, what harm can I mean? I only said your poor mother did not seem to know what a groom of the chambers was! How should she?"

"Come—come," says Frederick, "enough of this! Miss Prior, will you be so kind as to give us a little music?"

Miss Prior was playing Beethoven at the piano, very solemnly and finely, when our Black Sheep returned to this quiet fold, and, I am sorry to say, in a very riotous condition. The brilliancy of his eye, the purple flush on his nose, the unsteady gait, and uncertain tone of voice, told tales of Captain Clarence, who stumbled over more than one chair before he found a seat near me.

"Quite right, old boy," says he, winking at me. "Cut again—dooshid good fellosh. Better than being along with you shtoopid-old-fogish." And he began to warble wild "Fol-de-rol-lols" in an insane accompaniment to the music.

"By heavens, this is too bad!" growls Lovel. "Lady Baker, let your big man carry your son to bed. Thank you, Miss Prior!"

At a final yell, which the unlucky young scapegrace gave, Elizabeth stopped, and rose from the piano, looking very pale. She made her curtsey, and was departing, when the wretched young Captain sprang up, looked at her, and sank back on the sofa with another wild laugh. Bessy fled away scared, and white as a sheet.

"TAKE THE BRUTE TO BED!" roars the master of the house, in great wrath. And scapegrace was conducted to his apartment, whither he went laughing wildly, and calling out, "Come on, old sh-sh-shugar-baker!"

The morning after this fine exhibition, Captain Clarence Baker's mamma announced to us that her poor dear suffering boy was too ill to come to breakfast, and I believe he prescribed for himself devilled drumstick and soda-water, of which he partook in his bedroom. Lovel, seldom angry, was violently wroth with his brother-in-law; and, almost always polite, was at breakfast scarcely civil to Lady Baker. I am bound to say that female abused her position. She appealed to Cecilia's picture a great deal too much during the course of breakfast. She hinted, she sighed, she waggled her head at me, and spoke about "that angel" in the most tragic manner. Angel is all very well; but your angel brought in *à tout propos;* your departed blessing called out of her grave ever so many times a day; when grandmamma wants to carry a point of her own; when the children are naughty, or noisy; when papa

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betrays a flickering inclination to dine at his Club, or to bring home a bachelor friend or two to Shrublands;—I say your angel always dragged in by the wings into the conversation loses her effect. No man's heart put on wider crape than Lovel's at Cecilia's loss. Considering the circumstances, his grief was most creditable to him: but at breakfast, at lunch, about Bulkeley the footman, about the barouche or the phaeton, or any trumpery domestic perplexity, to have a *Deus intersit* was too much. And I observed, with some inward satisfaction, that when Baker uttered her pompous funereal phrases, rolled her eyes up to the ceiling, and appealed to that quarter, the children ate their jam and quarrelled and kicked their little shins under the table, Lovel read his paper and looked at his watch to see if it was omnibus time; and Bessy made the tea, quite undisturbed by the old lady's tragical prattle.

When Baker described her son's fearful cough and dreadfully feverish state, I said, "Surely, Lady Baker, *Mr. Drencher* had better be sent for;" and I suppose I uttered the disgusting dissyllable Drencher with a fine sarcastic accent; for once, just once, Bessy's grey eyes rose through the spectacles and met mine with a glance of unutterable sadness, then calmly settled down on to the slop-basin again, or the urn, in which her pale features, of course, were odiously distorted.

"You will not bring anybody home to dinner, Frederick, in my poor boy's state?" asks Lady B.

"He may stay in his bedroom I suppose," replies Lovel.

"He is Cecilia's brother, Frederick!" cries the Lady.

"Conf——" Lovel was beginning. What was he about to say?

"If you are going to confound your angel in heaven, I have nothing to say, sir!" cries the mother of Clarence.

"Parbleu, madame!" cried Lovel, in French; "if he were not my wife's brother, do you think I would let him stay here?"

"Parly Français? Oui, oui, oui!" cries Pop. "I know what pa means!"

"And so do *I* know. And I shall lend Uncle Clarence some books which Mr. Bonnington gave me, and——"

"Hold your tongue all!" shouts Lovel, with a stamp of his foot.

"You will, perhaps, have the great kindness to allow me the use of your carriage,—or, at least, to wait here until my poor suffering boy can be moved, Mr. Lovel?" says Lady B., with the airs of a martyr.

Lovel rang the bell. "The carriage for Lady Baker—at her Ladyship's hour, Bedford: and the cart for her luggage. Her Ladyship and Captain Baker are going away."

"I have lost one child, Mr. Lovel, whom some people seem

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to forget. I am not going to murder another! I will not leave this house, sir, *unless you drive me from it by force*, until the medical man has seen my boy!" And here she and sorrow sat down again. She was always giving warning. She was always fitting the halter and traversing the cart, was Lady B., but she for ever declined to drop the handkerchief and have the business over. I saw by a little shrug in Bessy's shoulders what the governess's views were of the matter: and, in a word, Lady B. no more went away on this day, than she had done on forty previous days when she announced her intention of going. She would accept benefits, you see, but then she insulted her benefactors, and so squared accounts.

That great healthy, florid, scarlet-whiskered medical wretch came at about twelve, saw Mr. Baker and prescribed for him: and *of course* he must have a few words with Miss Prior, and inquire into the state of her health. Just as on the previous occasion, I happened to be in the hall when Drencher went upstairs; Bedford happened to be looking out of his pantry-door: I burst into a yell of laughter when I saw Dick's livid face—the sight somehow suited my savage soul.

No sooner was Medicus gone than Bessy, grave and pale, in bonnet and spectacles, came sliding downstairs. I do not mean down the banister, which was Pop's favourite method of descent; but slim, tall, noiseless, in a nunlike calm, she swept down the steps. Of course I followed her. And there was Master Bedford's nose peeping through the pantry-door at us, as we went out with the children. Pray, what business of *his* was it to be always watching anybody who walked with Miss Prior?

"So, Bessy," I said, "what report does Mr.—hem!—Mr. Drencher—give of the interesting invalid?"

"Oh, the most horrid! He says that Captain Baker has several times had a dreadful disease brought on by drinking, and that he is mad when he has it. He has delusions, sees demons, when he is in this state—wants to be watched."

"Drencher tells you everything?"

She says meekly: "He attends us when we are ill."

I remark, with fine irony: "He attends the whole family: he is always coming to Shrublands!"

"He comes very often," Miss Prior says gravely.

"And do you mean to say, Bessy," I cry, madly cutting off two or three heads of yellow broom with my stick—"do you mean to say a fellow like that, who drops his *h*'s about the room, is a welcome visitor?"

"I should be very ungrateful if he were not welcome, Mr.

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Batchelor," says Miss Prior. "And call me by my surname, please —and he has taken care of all my family—and——"

"And, of course, of course, of course, Miss Prior!" say I brutally; "and this is the way the world wags; and this is the way we are ill, and are cured; and we are grateful to the doctor that cures us!"

She nods her grave head. "You used to be kinder to me once, Mr. Batchelor, in old days—in your—in my time of trouble! Yes, my dear, that is a beautiful bit of broom! Oh, what a fine butterfly!" (Cecilia scours the plain after the butterfly.) "You used to be kinder to me once—when we were both unhappy."

"I was unhappy," I say, "but I survived. I was ill, but I am now pretty well, thank you. I was jilted by a false heartless woman. Do you suppose there are no other heartless women in the world?" And I am confident, if Bessy's breast had not been steel, the daggers which darted out from my eyes would have bored frightful stabs in it.

But she shook her head, and looked at me so sadly that my eye-daggers tumbled down to the ground at once; for you see, though I am a jealous Turk, I am a very easily appeased jealous Turk; and if I had been Bluebeard, and my wife, just as I was going to decapitate her, had lifted up her head from the block, and cried a little, I should have dropped my scimitar, and said, "Come, come, Fatima, never mind for the present about that key and closet business, and I'll chop your head off some other morning." I say, Bessy disarmed me. Pooh! I say, women will make a fool of me to the end. Ah! ye gracious Fates! Cut my thread of life ere it grow too long. Suppose I were to live till seventy, and some little wretch of a woman were to set her cap at me? She would catch me—I know she would. All the males of our family have been spoony and soft, to a degree perfectly ludicrous and despicable to contemplate—— Well, Bessy Prior, putting a hand out, looked at me, and said—

"You are the oldest and best friend I have ever had, Mr. Batchelor—the only friend."

"Am I, Elizabeth?" I gasp, with a beating heart.

"Cissy is running back with a butterfly." (Our hands unlock.) "Don't you see the difficulties of my position? Don't you know that ladies are often jealous of governesses; and that unless—unless they imagined I was—I was favourable to Mr. Drencher, who is very good and kind—the ladies of Shrublands might not like my remaining alone in the house with—with—you understand?" A moment the eyes look over the spectacles: at the next, the meek bonnet bows down towards the ground.

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I wonder did she hear the bump—bumping of my heart! O heart!—O wounded heart! did I ever think thou wouldst bump—bump again? "Egl—Egl—izabeth," I say, choking with emotion, "do, do, do you—te—tell me—you don't—don't—don't—lo—love that apothecary?"

She shrugs her shoulder—her charming shoulder.

"And if," I hotly continue, "if a gentleman—if a man of mature age certainly, but who has a kind heart and four hundred a year of his own—were to say to you, 'Elizabeth! will you bid the flowers of a blighted life to bloom again?—Elizabeth! will you soothe a wounded heart?'——"

"Oh, Mr. Batchelor!" she sighed, and then added quickly, "Please, don't take my hand. Here's Pop."

And that dear child (bless him!) came up at the moment, saying, "Oh, Miss Prior, look here! I've got such a jolly big toad-stool!" And next came Cissy, with a confounded butterfly. O Richard the Third! Haven't you been maligned because you smothered two little nuisances in a Tower? What is to prove to me that you did not serve the little brutes right, and that you weren't a most humane man? Darling Cissy coming up, then, in her dear charming way, says, "You shan't take Mr. Batchelor's hand, you shall take *my* hand!" And she tosses up her little head, and walks with the instructress of her youth.

"Ces enfants ne comprennent guère le Français," says Miss Prior, speaking very rapidly.

"Après lonche?" I whisper. The fact is, I was so agitated I hardly knew what the French for lunch was. And then our conversation dropped: and the beating of my own heart was all the sound I heard.

Lunch came. I couldn't eat a bit: I should have choked. Bessy ate plenty, and drank a glass of beer. It was her dinner, to be sure. Young *Blacksheep* did not appear. We did not miss him. When Lady Baker began to tell her story of George the Fourth at Slane Castle, I went into my own room. I took a book. Books? Psha! I went into the garden. I took out a cigar. But no, I would not smoke it. Perhaps she——many people don't like smoking.

I went into the garden. "Come into the garden, Maud." I sat by a large lilac-bush. I waited. Perhaps she would come? The morning-room windows were wide open on the lawn. Will she never come? Ah! what is that tall form advancing? gliding—gliding into the chamber like a beauteous ghost? "Who most does like an angel show, you may be sure 'tis she." She comes up to the glass. She lays her spectacles down on the mantelpiece.

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She puts a slim white hand over her auburn hair and looks into the mirror. Elizabeth, Elizabeth! I come!

As I came up, I saw a horrid little grinning, debauched face surge over the back of a great armchair and look towards Elizabeth. It was Captain Blacksheep, of course. He laid his elbows over the chair. He looked keenly and with a diabolical smile at the unconscious girl; and just as I reached the window, he cried out, "*Bessy Bellenden, by Jove!*"

Elizabeth turned round, gave a little cry, and—— but what happened I shall tell in the ensuing chapter.

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CHAPTER V

IN WHICH I AM STUNG BY A SERPENT

IF when I heard Baker call out Bessy Bellenden, and adjure Jove, he had run forward and seized Elizabeth by the waist, or offered her other personal indignity, I too should have run forward on my side and engaged him. Though I am a stout elderly man, short in stature and in wind, I know I am a match for *that* rickety little Captain on his high-heeled boots. A match for him? I believe Miss Bessy would have been a match for both of us. Her white arm was as hard and polished as ivory. Had she held it straight pointed against the rush of the dragoon, he would have fallen backwards before his intended prey: I have no doubt he would. It was the hen, in this case, was stronger than the libertine fox, and *au besoin* would have pecked the little marauding vermin's eyes out. Had, I say, Partlet been weak, and Reynard strong, I *would* have come forward: I certainly would. Had he been a wolf now, instead of a fox, I am certain I should have run in upon him, grappled with him, torn his heart and tongue out of his black throat, and trampled the lawless brute to death.

Well, I didn't do any such thing. I was just *going* to run in —and I didn't. I was just going to rush to Bessy's side to clasp her (I have no doubt) to my heart: to beard the whiskered champion who was before her, and perhaps say, "Cheer thee—cheer thee, my persecuted maiden, my beauteous love—my Rebecca! Come on, Sir Brian de Bois Guilbert, thou dastard Templar! It is I, Sir Wilfrid of Ivanhoe." (By the way, though the fellow was not a *Templar*, he was a *Lincoln's-Inn-man*, having passed twice through the Insolvent Court there with infinite discredit.) But I made no heroic speeches. There was no need for Rebecca to jump out of window and risk her lovely neck. How could she, in fact, the French window being flush with the ground-floor? And I give you my honour, just as I was crying my war-cry, couching my lance, and rushing *à la rescousse* upon Sir Baker, a sudden thought made me drop my (figurative) point: a sudden idea made me rein in my galloping (metaphorical) steed and spare Baker for that time.

Suppose I had gone in? But for that sudden precaution, there

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might have been a Mrs. Batchelor. I might have been a bullied father of ten children. (Elizabeth has a fine high temper of her own.) What is four hundred and twenty a year, with a wife and perhaps half-a-dozen children? Should I have been a whit the happier? Would Elizabeth? Ah! no. And yet I feel a certain sort of shame, even now, when I think that I didn't go in. Not that I was in a fright, as some people choose to hint. I swear I was not. But the reason why I did not charge was this——

Nay, I *did* charge part of the way, and then, I own, stopped. It was an error in judgment. It wasn't a want of courage. Lord George Sackville was a brave man, and as cool as a cucumber under fire. Well, *he* didn't charge at the battle of Minden, and Prince Ferdinand made the deuce and all of a disturbance, as we know. Byng was a brave man,—and I ask, wasn't it a confounded shame executing him? So with respect to myself. Here is my statement. I make it openly. I don't care. I am accused of seeing a woman insulted, and not going to her rescue. I am not guilty, I say. That is, there were reasons which caused me not to attack. Even putting aside the superior strength of Elizabeth herself to the enemy, —I vow there were cogent and honourable reasons why I did not charge home.

You see I happened to be behind a blue lilac-bush (and was turning a rhyme—Heaven help us!—in which *death* was only to part me and Elizabeth) when I saw Baker's face surge over the chair-back. I rush forward as he cries "By Jove!" Had Miss Prior cried out on her part, the strength of twenty Heenans, I know, would have nerved this arm; but all she did was to turn pale, and say, "Oh, mercy! Captain Baker! Do pity me!"

"What! you remember me, Bessy Bellenden, do you?" asks the Captain, advancing.

"Oh, not that name! please, not that name!" cries Bessy.

"I thought I knew you yesterday," says Baker. "Only, gad, you see, I had so much claret on board, I did not much know what was what. And oh! Bessy, I have got such a splitter of a head-ache."

"Oh! please—please, my name is Miss Prior. Pray! pray, sir, don't——"

"You've got handsomer—doosid deal handsomer. Know you now well, your spectacles off. You come in here—teach my nephew and niece, humbug my sister, make love to the sh—— Oh! you uncommon sly little toad!"

"Captain Baker, I beg—I implore you," says Bessy, or something of the sort: for the white hands assumed an attitude of supplication.

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"Pooh! don't gammon *me!*" says the rickety Captain (or words to that effect), and seizes those two firm white hands in his moist trembling palms.

Now do you understand why I paused? When the dandy came grinning forward, with looks and gestures of familiar recognition: when the pale Elizabeth implored him to spare her:—a keen arrow of jealousy shot whizzing through my heart, and caused me well-nigh to fall backwards as I ran forwards. I bumped up against a bronze group in the garden. The group represented a lion stung by a serpent. *I* was a lion stung by a serpent too. Even Baker could have knocked me down. Fiends and anguish! he had known her before. The Academy, the life she had led, the wretched old tipsy ineffective guardian of a father—all these antecedents in poor Bessy's history passed through my mind. And I had offered my heart and troth to this woman! Now, my dear sir, I appeal to you. What would *you* have done? Would *you* have liked to have such a sudden suspicion thrown over the being of your affection? "Oh! spare me—spare me!" I heard her say, in clear—too clear—pathetic tones. And then there came rather a shrill "Ah!" and then the lion was up in my breast again; and I give you my honour, just as I was going to step forward—to step?—to *rush* forward from behind the urn where I had stood for a moment with thumping heart, Bessy's "Ah!" or little cry was followed by a *whack*, which I heard as clear as anything I ever heard in my life;—and I saw the little Captain spin back, topple over a chair heels up, and in this posture heard him begin to scream and curse in shrill tones. . . .

Not for long, for as the Captain and the chair tumble down, a door springs open;—a man rushes in, who pounces like a panther upon the prostrate Captain, pitches into his nose and eyes, and chokes his bad language by sending a fist down his naughty throat.

"Oh! thank you, Bedford!—please, leave him, Bedford! that's enough. There, don't hurt him any more!" says Bessy, laughing—laughing, upon my word.

"Ah! will you?" says Bedford. "Lie still, you little beggar, or I'll knock your head off. Look here, Miss Prior?—Elizabeth—dear—dear Elizabeth! I love you with all my heart, and soul, and strength—I do."

"O Bedford! Bedford!" warbles Elizabeth.

"I do! I can't help it. I must say it! Ever since Rome, I do. Lie still, you drunken little beast! It's no use. But I adore you, O Elizabeth! Elizabeth!" And there was Dick, who was always following Miss P. about, and poking his head into keyholes to spy her, actually making love to her over the prostrate body of the Captain.

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BEDFORD TO THE RESCUE

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Now, what was I to do? Wasn't I in a most confoundedly awkward situation? A lady had been attacked—*a* lady?—*the* lady, and I hadn't rescued her. Her insolent enemy was overthrown, and I hadn't done it. A champion, three inches shorter than myself, had come in, and dealt the blow. I was in such a rage of mortification, that I should have liked to thrash the Captain and Bedford too. The first I know I could have matched: the second was a tough little hero. And it was he who rescued the damsel, whilst I stood by! In a strait so odious, sudden, and humiliating, what should I, what could I, what did I do?

Behind the lion and snake there is a brick wall and marble balustrade, built for no particular reason, but flanking three steps and a grassy terrace, which then rises up on a level to the house-windows. Beyond the balustrade is a shrubbery of more lilacs and so forth, by which you can walk round into another path, which also leads up to the house. So as I had not charged—ah! woe is me!—as the battle was over, I—I just went round that shrubbery into the other path, and so entered the house, arriving like Fortinbras in "Hamlet," when everybody is dead and sprawling, you know, and the whole business is done.

And was there to be no end to my shame, or to Bedford's laurels? In that brief interval, whilst I was walking round the bypath (just to give myself a pretext for entering coolly into the premises), this fortunate fellow had absolutely engaged another and larger champion. This was no other than Bulkeley, my Lady B.'s first-class attendant. When the Captain fell, amidst his screams and curses, he called for Bulkeley: and that individual made his appearance, with a little Scotch cap perched on his powdered head.

"Hullo! what's the row year?" says Goliath, entering.

"Kill that blackguard! Hang him, kill him!" screams Captain Blacksheep, rising with bleeding nose.

"I say, what's the row year?" asks the grenadier.

"Off with your cap, sir, before a lady!" calls out Bedford.

"Hoff with my cap! you be blo——"

But he said no more, for little Bedford jumped some two feet from the ground, and knocked the cap off, so that a cloud of ambrosial powder filled the room with violet odours. The immense frame of the giant shook at this insult: "I will be the death on you, you little beggar!" he grunted out; and was advancing to destroy Dick, just as I entered in the cloud which his head had raised.

"I'll knock the brains as well as the powder out of your ugly head!" says Bedford, springing at the poker. At which juncture I entered.

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"What—what is this disturbance?" I say, advancing with an air of mingled surprise and resolution.

"You git out of the way till I knock his 'ead off!" roars Bulkeley.

"Take up your cap, sir, and leave the room," I say, still with the same elegant firmness.

"Put down that there poker, you coward!" bellows the monster on board-wages.

"Miss Prior!" I say (like a dignified hypocrite, as I own I was), "I hope no one has offered you a rudeness?" And I glare round, first at the knight of the bleeding nose, and then at his squire.

Miss Prior's face, as she replied to me, wore a look of awful scorn.

"Thank you, sir," she said, turning her head over her shoulder and looking at me with her grey eyes. "Thank you, Richard Bedford! God bless you! I shall ever be thankful to you, wherever I am." And the stately figure swept out of the room.

She had seen me behind that confounded statue, then, and I had not come to her! O torments and racks! O scorpions, fiends, and pitchforks! The face of Bedford, too (flashing with knightly gratitude anon as she spoke kind words to him and passed on), wore a look of scorn as he turned towards me, and then stood, his nostrils distended and breathing somewhat hard, glaring at his enemies, and still grasping his mace of battle.

When Elizabeth was gone, there was a pause of a moment, and then Blacksheep, taking his bleeding cambric from his nose, shrieks out, "Kill him, I say! A fellow that dares to hit one in my condition, and when I'm down! Bulkeley, you great hulking jackass! kill him, I say!"

"Jest let him put that there poker down, that's hall," growls Bulkeley.

"You're afraid, you great cowardly beast! You shall go, Mr. What-d'ye-call-'im—Mr. Bedford—you shall have the sack, sir, as sure as your name is what it is! I'll tell my brother-in-law everything; and as for that woman——"

"If you say a word against her, I'll cane you wherever I see you, Captain Baker!" I cry out.

"Who spoke to *you?*" says the Captain, falling back and scowling at me.

"Who hever told you to put *your* foot in?" says the squire.

I was in such a rage, and so eager to find an object on which I might wreak my fury, that I confess I plunged at this Bulkeley. I gave him two most violent blows on the waistcoat, which caused

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him to double up with such frightful contortions, that Bedford burst out laughing; and even the Captain with the damaged eye and nose began to laugh too. Then, taking a lesson from Dick, as there was a fine shining dagger on the table, used for the cutting open of reviews and magazines, I seized and brandished this weapon, and I daresay would have sheathed it in the giant's bloated corpus, had he made any movement towards me. But he only called out, "hI'll be the death on you, you cowards! hI'll be the death of both on you!" and snatching up his cap from the carpet, walked out of the room.

"Glad you did that, though," says Baker, nodding his head. "Think I'd best pack up."

And now the Devil of Rage which had been swelling within me gave place to a worse devil—the Devil of Jealousy—and I turned on the Captain, who was also just about to slink away:—

"Stop!" I cried out—I screamed out, I may say.

"Who spoke to you, I should like to know? and who the dooce dares to speak to me in that sort of way?" says Clarence Baker, with a plentiful garnish of expletives, which need not be here inserted. But he stopped, nevertheless, and turned slouching round.

"You spoke just now of Miss Prior?" I said. "Have you anything against her?"

"What's that to you?" he asked.

"I am her oldest friend. I introduced her into this family. *Dare* you say a word against her?"

"Well, who the dooce has?"

"You knew her before?"

"Yes, I did, then."

"When she went by the name of Bellenden?"

"Of course I did. And what's that to you?" he screams out.

"I this day asked her to be my wife, sir! *That's* what it is to me!" I replied with severe dignity.

Mr. Clarence began to whistle. "Oh! if that's it—of course not!" he says.

The jealous demon writhed within me and rent me.

"You mean that there *is* something, then?" I asked, glaring at the young reprobate.

"No, I don't," says he, looking very much frightened. "No, there is nothin'. Upon my sacred honour, there isn't, that I know." (I was looking uncommonly fierce at this time, and, I must own, would rather have quarrelled with somebody than not.) "No, there is nothin' that I know. Ever so many years ago, you see, I used to go with Tom Papillion, Turkington, and two or three

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fellows, to that theatre. Dolphin had it. And we used to go behind the scenes—and—and I own I had a row with her. And I was in the wrong. There now, I own I was. And she left the theatre. And she behaved quite right. And I was very sorry. And I believe she is as good a woman as ever stept now. And the father was a disreputable old man, but most honourable—I know he was. And there was a fellow in the Bombay service—a fellow by the name of Walker or Walkingham—yes, Walkingham; and I used to meet him at the 'Cave of Harmony,' you know; and he told me that she was as right as right could be. And he was doosidly cut up about leaving her. And he would have married her, I dessay, only for his father the General, who wouldn't stand it. And he was ready to hang himself when he went away. He used to drink awfully, and then he used to swear about her; and we used to chaff him, you know. Low vulgarish sort of man, he was; and a very passionate fellow. And if you're goin' to marry her, you know—of course, I ask your pardon, and that; and upon the honour of a gentleman I know nothin' against her. And I wish you joy and all that sort of thing. I do now, really now!" And so saying, the mean mischievous little monkey sneaked away, and clambered up to his own perch in his own bedroom.

Worthy Mrs. Bonnington, with a couple of her young ones, made her appearance at this juncture. She had a key, which gave her a free pass through the garden door, and brought her children for an afternoon's play and fighting with their little nephew and niece. Decidedly, Bessy did not bring up her young folks well. Was it that their grandmothers spoiled them, and undid the governess's work? Were those young people odious (as they often were) by nature, or rendered so by the neglect of their guardians? If Bessy had loved her charges more, would they not have been better? Had she a kind, loving, maternal heart? Ha! This thought,—this jealous doubt,—smote my bosom: and were she mine, and the mother of many possible little Batchelors, would she be kind to *them?* Would they be wilful, and selfish, and abominable little wretches, in a word, like these children? Nay—nay! Say that Elizabeth has but a cold heart; we cannot be all perfection. But, *per contra*, you must admit that, cold as she is, she does her duty. How good she has been to her own brothers and sisters: how cheerfully she has given away her savings to them: how admirably she has behaved to her mother, hiding the iniquities of that disreputable old schemer, and covering her improprieties with decent filial screens and pretexts. Her mother? *Ah! grands dieux!* You want to marry, Charles Batchelor, and you will have that greedy pauper for a mother-in-law; that fluffy Bluecoat boy,

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those hobnailed taw-players, top-spinners, toffee-eaters, those underbred girls, for your brothers and sisters-in-law! They will be quartered upon you. You are so absurdly weak and good-natured —you know you are—that you will never be able to resist. Those boys will grow up; they will go out as clerks or shop-boys; get into debt and expect you to pay their bills: want to be articled to attorneys and so forth, and call upon you for the premium. Their mother will never be out of your house. She will ferret about in your drawers and wardrobes, filch your haberdashery, and cast greedy eyes on the very shirts and coats on your back, and calculate when she can get them for her boys. Those vulgar young miscreants will never fail to come and dine with you on a Sunday. They will bring their young linendraper or articled friends. They will draw bills on you, or give their own to money-lenders, and unless you take up those bills they will consider you a callous avaricious brute, and the heartless author of their ruin. The girls will come and practise on your wife's piano. *They* won't come to you on Sundays only; they will always be staying in the house. They will always be preventing a *tête-à-tête* between your wife and you. As they grow old, they will want her to take them out to tea-parties, and to give such entertainments, where they will introduce their odious young men. They will expect you to commit meannesses, in order to get theatre tickets for them from the newspaper editors of your acquaintance. You will have to sit in the back seat; to pay the cab to and from the play: to see glances and bows of recognition passing between them and dubious bucks in the lobbies: and to lend the girls your wife's gloves, scarfs, ornaments, smelling-bottles, and handkerchiefs, which of course they will never return. If Elizabeth is ailing from any circumstance, they will get a footing in your house, and she will be jealous of them. The ladies of your own family will quarrel with them of course; and very likely your mother-in-law will tell them a piece of her mind. And you bring this dreary certainty upon you, because, forsooth, you fall in love with a fine figure, a pair of grey eyes, and a head of auburn (not to say red) hair! O Charles Batchelor! in what a galley hast thou seated thyself, and what a family is crowded in thy boat!

All these thoughts are passing in my mind, as good Mrs. Bonnington is prattling to me—I protest I don't know about what. I think I caught some faint sentences about the Patagonian mission, the National schools, and Mr. Bonnington's lumbago; but I can't say for certain. I was busy with my own thoughts. I had asked the awful question—I was not answered. Bessy had even gone away in a huff about my want of gallantry, but I was easy on that score. As for Mr. Drencher, she had told me her sentiments regarding

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him; "and though I am considerably older, yet," thought I, "I need not be afraid of *that* rival. But when she says *yes?* Oh dear! oh dear! *Yes* means Elizabeth—certainly, a brave young woman—but it means Mrs. Prior, and Gus, and Amelia Jane, and the whole of that dismal family." No wonder, with these dark thoughts crowding my mind, Mrs. Bonnington found me absent; and, as a comment upon some absurd reply of mine, said, "La! Mr. Batchelor, you must be crossed in love!" Crossed in love! It might be as well for some folks if they *were* crossed in love! At my age, and having loved madly, as I did, that party in Dublin, a man doesn't take the second fit by any means so strongly. Well! well! the die was cast, and I was there to bide the hazard. What can be the matter? I look pale and unwell, and had better see Mr. D. Thank you, my dear Mrs. Bonnington. I had a violent —a violent toothache last night—yes, toothache; and was kept awake, thank you. And there's nothing like having it out? and Mr. D. draws them beautifully, and has taken out six of your children's? It's better now; I daresay it will be better still, soon. I retire to my chamber: I take a book—can't read one word of it. I resume my tragedy. Tragedy? Bosh!

I suppose Mr. Drencher thought his yesterday's patient would be better for a little more advice and medicine, for he must pay a second visit to Shrublands on this day, just after the row with the Captain had taken place, and walked up to the upper regions, as his custom was. Very likely he found Mr. Clarence bathing his nose there, and prescribed for the injured organ. Certainly he knocked at the door of Miss Prior's schoolroom (the fellow was always finding a pretext for entering *that* apartment), and Master Bedford comes to me with a woebegone livid countenance, and a "Ha! ha! young Sawbones is up with her!"

"So, my poor Dick," I say, "I heard your confession as I was myself running in to rescue Miss P. from that villain."

"My blood was hup," groans Dick,—"up, I beg your pardon. When I saw that young rascal lay a hand on her, I could not help flying at him. I would have hit him if he had been my own father. And I could not help saying what was on my mind. It would come out; I knew it would some day. I might as well wish for the moon as hope to get her. She thinks herself superior to me, and perhaps she is mistaken. But it's no use; she don't care for me; she don't care for anybody. Now the words are out, in course I mustn't stay here."

"You may get another place easily enough with your character, Bedford!"

But he shook his head. "I'm not disposed to black nobody

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else's boots no more. I have another place. I have saved a bit of money. My poor old mother is gone, whom you used to be so kind to, Mr. B. I'm alone now. Confound that Sawbones, will he *never* come away? I'll tell you about my plans some day, sir, and I know you'll be so good as to help me." And away goes Dick, looking the picture of woe and despair.

Presently, from the upper rooms, Sawbones descends. I happened to be standing in the hall, you see, talking to Dick. Mr. Drencher scowls at me fiercely, and I suppose I return him haughty glance for glance. He hated me: I him: I liked him to hate me.

"How is your patient, Mr.—a—Drencher?" I ask.

"Trifling contusion of the nose—brown paper and vinegar," says the Doctor.

"Great powers! did the villain strike her on the nose?" I cry in terror.

"*Her*—whom?" says he.

"Oh—ah—yes—indeed; it's nothing," I say, smiling. The fact is I had forgotten about Baker in my natural anxiety for Elizabeth.

"I don't know what you mean by laughing, sir," says the red-haired practitioner. "But if you mean chaff, Mr. Batchelor, let me tell you I don't want chaff, and I won't have chaff!" and herewith exit Sawbones, looking black doses at me.

Jealous of me, think I, as I sink down in a chair in the morning-room, where the combat had just taken place. And so thou, too, art fever-caught, my poor physician! What a fascination this girl has! Here's the butler: here's the medical man: here am I: here is the Captain has been smitten—smitten on the nose. Has the gardener been smitten too, and is the page gnawing his buttons off for jealousy, and is Monsieur Bulkeley equally in love with her? I take up a review, and think over this, as I glance through its pages.

As I am lounging and reading, Monsieur Bulkeley himself makes his appearance, bearing in cloaks and packages belonging to his lady. "Have the goodness to take that cap off," I say coolly.

"*You* 'ave the goodness to remember that if hever I see you hout o' this 'ouse I'll punch your hugly 'ead off," says the monstrous menial. But I poise my paper-cutter, and he retires growling.

From despondency I pass to hope; and the prospect of marriage, which before appeared so dark to me, assumes a gayer hue. I have four hundred a year, and that house in Devonshire Street, Bloomsbury Square, of which the upper part will be quite big enough for us. If we have children, there is Queen Square for them to walk and play in. Several genteel families I know, who still

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live in the neighbourhood, will come and see my wife, and we shall have a comfortable cosy little society, suited to our small means. The tradesmen in Lamb's Conduit Street are excellent, and the music at the Foundling always charming. I shall give up one of my clubs. The other is within an easy walk.

No: my wife's relations will *not* plague me. Bessy is a most sensible determined woman, and as cool a hand as I know. She will only see Mrs. Prior at proper (and, I trust, distant) intervals. Her brothers and sisters will learn to know their places, and not obtrude upon me or the company which I keep. My friends, who are educated people and gentlemen, will not object to visit me because I live over a shop (my ground-floor and spacious back premises in Devonshire Street are let to a German toy-warehouse). I shall add a hundred or two at least to my income by my literary labour; and Bessy, who has practised frugality all her life, and been a good daughter and a good sister, I know will prove a good wife, and, please Heaven! a good mother. Why, four hundred a year *plus* two hundred, is a nice little income. And my old College friend, Wigmore, who is just on the Bench? He will, he must get me a place—say three hundred a year. With nine hundred a year we can do quite well.

Love is full of elations and despondencies. The future, over which such a black cloud of doubt lowered a few minutes since, blushed a sweet rose-colour now. I saw myself happy, beloved, with a competence, and imagined myself reposing in the delightful garden of Red Lion Square on some summer evening, and half-a-dozen little Batchelors frisking over the flower-bespangled grass there.

After our little colloquy, Mrs. Bonnington not finding much pleasure in my sulky society, had gone to Miss Prior's room with her young folks, and as the door of the morning-room opened now and again, I could hear the dear young ones scuttling about the passages, where they were playing at horses and fighting and so forth. After a while good Mrs. B. came down from the schoolroom. "Whatever has happened, Mr. Batchelor?" she said to me, in her passage through the morning-room. "Miss Prior is very pale and absent. *You* are very pale and absent. Have you been courting her, you naughty man, and trying to supplant Mr. Drencher? There now, you turn as red as my ribbon! Ah! Bessy is a good girl, and *so* fond of my dear children. 'Ah, dear Mrs. Bonnington,' she says to me—but of course you won't tell Lady B.: it would make Lady B. perfectly furious. 'Ah!' says Miss P. to me, 'I wish, ma'am, that my little charges were like their dear little uncles and aunts—so exquisitely brought up!' Pop again wished to beat

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his uncle. I wish—I wish Frederick would send that child to school! Miss P. owns that he is too much for her. Come, children, it is time to go to dinner." And, with more of this prattle, the good lady summons her young ones, who descend from the schoolroom with their nephew and niece.

Following nephew and niece, comes demure Miss Prior, to whom I fling a knowing glance, which says, plain as eyes can speak—Do, Elizabeth, come and talk for a little to your faithful Batchelor! She gives a sidelong look of intelligence, leaves a parasol and a pair of gloves on a table, accompanies Mrs. Bonnington and the young ones into the garden, sees the clergyman's wife and children disappear through the garden gate, and her own youthful charges engaged in the strawberry-beds; and, of course, returns to the morning-room for her parasol and gloves, which she had forgotten. There is a calmness about that woman—an easy dauntless dexterity, which frightens me—*ma parole d'honneur*. In that white breast is there a white marble stone in place of the ordinary cordial apparatus? Under the white velvet glove of that cool hand are there bones of cold steel?

"So, Drencher has again been here, Elizabeth?" I say.

She shrugs her shoulders. "To see that wretched Captain Baker. The horrid little man will die! He was not actually sober just now when he—when I—when you saw him. How I wish you had come sooner—to prevent that horrible, tipsy, disreputable quarrel! It makes me very very thoughtful, Mr. Batchelor. He will speak to his mother—to Mr. Lovel. I shall have to go away. I know I must."

"And don't you know where you can find a home, Elizabeth? Have the words I spoke this morning been so soon forgotten?"

"Oh! Mr. Batchelor! you spoke in a heat. You could not think seriously of a poor girl like me, so friendless and poor, with so many family ties. Pop is looking this way, please. To a man bred like you, what can I be?"

"You may make the rest of my life happy, Elizabeth!" I cry. "We are friends of such old—old date, that you know what my disposition is."

"Oh! indeed," says she, "it is certain that there never was a sweeter disposition or a more gentle creature." (Somehow I thought she said the words "gentle creature" with rather a sarcastic tone of voice.) "But consider your habits, dear sir. I remember how in Beak Street you used to be always giving, and, in spite of your income, always poor. You love ease and elegance; and having, I daresay, not too much for yourself now, would you encumber yourself with—with me and the expenses of a household? I shall always

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regard you, esteem you, love you as the best friend I ever had, and —*voici venir la mère du vaurien.*"

Enter Lady Baker. "Do I interrupt a *tête-à-tête*, pray?" she asks.

"My benefactor has known me since I was a child, and befriended me since then," says Elizabeth, with simple kindness beaming in her look. "We were just speaking—I was just—ah! —telling him that my uncle has invited me most kindly to Saint Boniface, whenever I can be spared; and if you and the family go to the Isle of Wight this autumn, perhaps you will intercede with Mr. Lovel, and let me have a little holiday. Mary will take every charge of the children, and I do so long to see my dear aunt and cousins! And I was begging Mr. Batchelor to use his interest with you, and to entreat you to use *your* interest to get me leave. That was what our talk was about."

The deuce it was! I couldn't say No, of course; but I protest I had no idea until that moment that our conversation had been about Aunt and Uncle at Saint Boniface. Again came the horrible suspicion, the dreadful doubt—the chill as of a cold serpent crawling down my back—which had made me pause, and gasp, and turn pale, anon when Bessy and Captain Clarence were holding colloquy together. What *has* happened in this woman's life? *Do* I know all about her, or anything; or only just as much as she chooses? Oh, Batch—Batch! I suspect you are no better than an old gaby!

"And Mr. Drencher has just been here and seen your son," Bessy continues softly; "and he begs and entreats your Ladyship to order Captain Baker to be more prudent. Mr. D. says Captain Baker is shortening his life, indeed he is, by his carelessness."

There is Mr. Lovel coming from the City, and the children are running to their papa! And Miss Prior makes her patroness a meek curtsey, and demurely slides away from the room. With a sick heart I say to myself, "She has been—yes—humbugging is the word—humbugging Lady B. Elizabeth! Elizabeth! can it be possible thou art humbugging *me* too?"

Before Lovel enters, Bedford rapidly flits through the room. He looks as pale as a ghost. His face is awfully gloomy.

"Here's the governor come," Dick whispers to me. "It must all come hout now—out, I beg your pardon. So she's caught *you*, has she? I thought she would." And he grins a ghastly grin.

"What do you mean?" I ask, and I daresay turn rather red.

"I know all about it. I'll speak to you to-night, sir. Confound her! confound her!" and he doubles his knuckles into his eyes, and rushes out of the room over Buttons entering with the afternoon tea.

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"What on earth's the matter, and why are you knocking the things about?" Lovel asks at dinner of his butler, who, indeed, acted as one distraught. A savage gloom was depicted on Bedford's usually melancholy countenance, and the blunders in his service were many. With his brother-in-law Lovel did not exchange many words. Clarence was not yet forgiven for his escapade two days previous. And when Lady Baker cried, "Mercy, child! what have you done to yourself?" and the Captain replied, "Knocked my face against a dark door—made my nose bleed," Lovel did not look up or express a word of sympathy. "If the fellow knocked his worthless head off, I should not be sorry," the widower murmured to me. Indeed, the tone of the Captain's voice, his *ton*, and his manners in general, were especially odious to Mr. Lovel, who could put up with the tyranny of women, but revolted against the vulgarity and assumption of certain men.

As yet nothing had been said about the morning's quarrel. Here we were all sitting with a sword hanging over our heads, smiling and chatting, and talking cookery, politics, the weather, and what not. Bessy was perfectly cool and dignified at tea. Danger or doubt did not seem to affect *her*. If she had been ordered for execution at the end of the evening she would have made the tea, played her Beethoven, answered questions in her usual voice, and glided about from one to another with her usual dignified calm, until the hour of decapitation came, when she would have made her curtsey, and gone out and had the amputation performed quite quietly and neatly. I admired her, I was frightened before her. The cold snake crept more than ever down my back as I meditated on her. I made such awful blunders at whist that even good Mrs. Bonnington lost her temper with her fourteen shillings. Miss Prior would have played her hand out, and never made a fault, you may be sure. She retired at her accustomed hour. Mrs. Bonnington had her glass of negus, and withdrew too. Lovel keeping his eyes sternly on the Captain, that officer could only get a little sherry and seltzer, and went to bed sober. Lady Baker folded Lovel in her arms, a process to which my poor friend very humbly submitted. Everybody went to bed, and no tales were told of the morning's doings. There was a respite, and no execution could take place till to-morrow at any rate. Put on thy nightcap, Damocles, and slumber for to-night at least. Thy slumbers will not be cut short by the awful Chopper of Fate.

Perhaps you may ask what need had *I* to be alarmed? Nothing could happen to me. I was not going to lose a governess's place. Well, if I must tell the truth, I had not acted with entire candour in the matter of Bessy's appointment. In recommending her to

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Lovel and the late Mrs. L., I had answered for her probity, and so forth, with all my might. I had described the respectability of her family, her father's campaigns, her grandfather's (old Doctor Sargent's) celebrated sermons; and had enlarged with the utmost eloquence upon the learning and high character of her uncle, the Master of Boniface, and the deserved regard he bore his niece. But that part of Bessy's biography which related to the Academy I own I had not touched upon. *A quoi bon?* Would every gentleman or lady like to have everything told about him or her? I had kept the Academy dark then; and so had brave Dick Bedford the butler; and should that miscreant Captain reveal the secret, I knew there would be an awful commotion in the building. I should have to incur Lovel's not unjust reproaches for *suppressio veri*, and the anger of those two *viragines*, the grandmothers of Lovel's children. I was more afraid of the women than of him, though conscience whispered me that I had not acted quite rightly by my friend.

When, then, the bed-candles were lighted, and every one said good-night, "Oh! Captain Baker," say I gaily, and putting on a confoundedly hypocritical grin, "if you will come into my room, I will give you that book."

"What book?" says Baker.

"The book we were talking of this morning."

"Hang me, if I know what you mean," says he. And luckily for me, Lovel, giving a shrug of disgust, and a good-night to me, stalked out of the room, bed-candle in hand. No doubt, he thought his wretch of a brother-in-law did not well remember after dinner what he had done or said in the morning.

As I now had the Blacksheep to myself, I said calmly, "You are quite right. There was no talk about a book at all, Captain Baker. But I wished to see you alone, and impress upon you my earnest wish that everything which occurred this morning—mind, *everything*—should be considered as strictly private, and should be confided to *no person whatever*—you understand?—to no person."

"Confound me," Baker breaks out, "if I understand what you mean by your books and your 'strictly private.' I shall speak what I choose—hang me!"

"In that case, sir," I said, "will you have the goodness to send a friend of yours to my friend Captain Fitzboodle? I must consider the matter as personal between ourselves. You insulted—and, as I find now, for the second time—a lady whose relations to me you know. You have given neither to her, nor to me, the apology to which we are both entitled. You refuse even to promise to be silent regarding a painful scene which was occasioned by

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your own brutal and cowardly behaviour; and you must abide by the consequences, sir! you must abide by the consequences!" And I glared at him over my flat candlestick.

"Curse me!—and hang me!—and," &c. &c. &c. he says, "if I know what all this is about. What the dooce do you talk to *me* about books, and about silence, and apologies, and sending Captain Fitzboodle to me? *I* don't want to see Captain Fitzboodle—great fat brute! *I* know him perfectly well."

"Hush!" say I, "here's Bedford." In fact, Dick appeared at this juncture, to close the house and put the lamps out.

But Captain Clarence only spoke or screamed louder. "What do I care about who hears me? That fellow insulted me already to-day, and I'd have pitched his life out of him, only I was down, and I'm so confounded weak and nervous, and just out of my fever—and—and hang it all! what are you driving at, Mr. What's-your-name?" And the wretched little creature cries almost as he speaks.

"Once for all, will you agree that the affair about which we spoke shall go no further?" I say, as stern as Draco.

"I shan't say anythin' about it. I wish you'd leave me alone, you fellows, and not come botherin'. I wish I could get a glass of brandy-and-water up in my bedroom. I tell you I can't sleep without it," whimpers the wretch.

"Sorry I laid hands on you, sir," says Bedford sadly. "It wasn't worth the while. Go to bed, and I'll get you something warm."

"Will you, though? I couldn't sleep without it. Do now—do now! and I won't say anythin'—I won't now—on the honour of a gentleman, I won't. Good-night, Mr. What-d'ye-call." And Bedford leads the helot to his chamber.

"I've got him in bed; and I've given him a dose; and I put some laudanum in it. He ain't been out. He has not had much to-day," says Bedford, coming back to my room, with his face ominously pale.

"You have given him laudanum?" I ask.

"*Sawbones* gave him some yesterday,—told me to give him a little—forty drops," growls Bedford.

Then the gloomy major-domo puts a hand into each waistcoat pocket, and looks at me. "You want to fight for her, do you, sir? Calling out, and that sort of game? Phoo!"—and he laughs scornfully.

"The little miscreant is too despicable, I own," say I, "and it's absurd for a peaceable fellow like me to talk about powder and shot at this time of day. But what could I do?"

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"I say it's SHE ain't worth it," says Bedford, lifting up both clenched fists out of the waistcoat pockets.

"What do you mean, Dick?" I ask.

"She's humbugging you—she's humbugging me,—she's humbugging everybody," roars Dick. "Look here, sir!" and out of one of the clenched fists he flings a paper down on the table.

"What is it?" I ask. It's her handwriting. I see the neat trim lines on the paper.

"It's not to you; nor yet to me," says Bedford.

"Then how dare you read it, sir?" I ask, all of a tremble.

"It's to him. It's to Sawbones," hisses out Bedford. "Sawbones dropt it as he was getting into his gig; and I read it. *I* ain't going to make no bones about whether it's wrote to me or not. She tells him how you asked her to marry you." ("Ha!") "That's how I came to know it. And do you know what she calls you, and what *he* calls you,—that castor-hoil beast? And do you know what she says of you? That you hadn't pluck to stand by her to-day. There,—it's all down under her hand and seal. You may read it, or not, if you like. And if poppy or mandragora will medicine you to sleep afterwards, I just recommend you to take it. *I* shall go and get a drop out of the Captain's bottle—I shall."

And he leaves me, and the fatal paper on the table.

Now, suppose you had been in my case—would you, or would you not, have read the paper? Suppose there is some news—bad news—about the woman you love, will you, or will you not, hear it? Was Othello a rogue because he let Iago speak to him? There was the paper. It lay there glimmering under the light, with all the house quiet.

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CHAPTER VI

CECILIA'S SUCCESSOR

MONSIEUR ET HONORÉ LECTEUR! I see, as perfectly as if you were sitting opposite to me, the scorn depicted on your noble countenance when you read my confession that I, Charles Batchelor, Esquire, did burglariously enter the premises of Edward Drencher, Esquire, M.R.C.S.I. (phew! the odious pestle-grinder, I never could bear him!), and break open, and read a certain letter his property. I may have been wrong, but I am candid. I tell my misdeeds; some fellows hold their tongues. Besides, my good man, consider the temptation, and the horrid insight into the paper which Bedford's report had already given me. Would *you* like to be told that the girl of your heart was playing fast and loose with it, had none of her own, or had given hers to another? I don't want to make a Mrs. Robin Gray of any woman, and merely because "her mither presses her sair" to marry against her will. "If Miss Prior," thought I, "prefers this lint-scraper to me, ought I to baulk her? He is younger, and stronger, certainly, than myself. Some people may consider him handsome. (By the way, what a remarkable thing it is about many women, that, in affairs of the heart, they don't seem to care or understand whether a man is a gentleman or not.) It may be it is my superior fortune and social station which may induce Elizabeth to waver in her choice between me and my bleeding, bolusing, tooth-drawing rival. If so, and I am only taken from mercenary considerations, what a pretty chance of subsequent happiness does either of us stand! Take the vaccinator, girl, if thou preferrest him! I know what it is to be crossed in love already. It's hard, but I can bear it! I ought to know, I must know, I *will* know what is in that paper!" So saying, as I pace round and round the table where the letter lies flickering white under the midnight taper, I stretch out my hand—I seize the paper—I——well, I own it—there—yes—I took it and I read it.

Or, rather, I may say, I read that part of IT which the bleeder and blisterer had flung down. It was but a fragment of a letter—a fragment—oh! how bitter to swallow! A lump of Epsom salt

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could not have been more disgusting. It appeared (from Bedford's statement) that Æsculapius, on getting into his gig, had allowed this scrap of paper to whisk out of his pocket—the rest he read, no doubt, under the eyes of the writer. Very likely, during the perusal, he had taken and squeezed the false hand which wrote the lines. Very likely the first part of the *precious document* contained compliments to him—from the horrible context I judged so—compliments to that vendor of leeches and bandages, into whose heart I daresay I wished ten thousand lancets might be stuck, as I perused the FALSE ONE'S wheedling address to him! So ran the document. How well every word of it was engraved on my anguished heart! If page *three*, which I suppose was about the bit of the letter which I got, was as it was—what must pages *one* and *two* have been? The dreadful document began, then, thus:—

"——dear hair in the locket, which I shall *ever* wear for the sake of *him who gave it*"—(dear hair! indeed—disgusting carrots! She should have been ashamed to call it "dear hair")—"for the sake of him who gave it and whose *bad temper* I shall pardon, because I think in spite of his faults he is a *little fond* of his poor Lizzie! Ah, Edward! how *could* you go on so the last time about poor Mr. B.! Can you imagine that I can ever have more than a filial regard for the kind old gentleman!" (*Il était question de moi, ma parole d'honneur.* I was the kind old gentleman!) "I have known him since my childhood. He was intimate in our family in earlier and happier days; made our house his home; and, I must say, was most kind to all of us children. If he has vanities, you naughty boy, is he the only one of his sex who is vain? Can you fancy that such an old creature (an *old muff*, as you call him, you wicked satirical man) could ever make an impression on my heart? No, sir!" (Aha! So I was an old muff, was I?) "Though I don't wish to make *you* vain too, or that other people should laugh at you, as you do at poor dear Mr. B., I think, sir, you need but look *in your glass* to see that you need not be afraid of such a rival as *that*. You fancy he is attentive to me? If you looked only a little angrily at him, he would fly back to London. To-day, when your *horrid little patient* did presume to offer to take my hand, when I boxed his little wicked ears and sent him *spinning* to the end of the room—poor Mr. Batch was so *frightened* that he did not *dare* to come into the room, and I saw him peeping behind a statue on the lawn, and he would not come in until the *servants arrived*. Poor man! We cannot all of us have courage like *a certain Edward*, who I know is as *bold as a lion*. Now, sir, you must not be quarrelling with that wretched little Captain for being rude. I

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have shown him that I can very well *take care of myself*. I knew the *odious thing* the first moment I set eyes on him, though he had forgotten me. Years ago I met him, and I remember he was equally *rude and tips*——"

Here the letter was torn. Beyond "*tips*" it did not go. But that was enough, wasn't it? To this woman I had offered a gentle and manly, I may say a kind and tender heart—I had offered four hundred a year in funded property, besides my house in Devonshire Street, Bloomsbury—and she preferred *Edward*, forsooth, at the sign of the Gallipot: and may ten thousand pestles smash his brains!

You may fancy what a night I had after reading that scrap. I promise you I did not sleep much. I heard the hours toll as I kept vigil. I lay amidst shattered capitals, broken shafts of the tumbled palace which I had built in imagination—oh! how bright and stately! I sat amongst the ruins of my own happiness, surrounded by the murdered corpses of innocent-visioned domestic joys. Tick—tock! Moment after moment I heard on the clock the clinking footsteps of wakeful grief. I fell into a doze towards morning, and dreamed that I was dancing with Glorvina, when I woke with a start, finding Bedford arrived with my shaving-water and opening the shutters. When he saw my haggard face he wagged his head.

"You *have* read it, I see, sir," says he.

"Yes, Dick," groaned I out of bed, "I have swallowed it." And I laughed I may say a fiendish laugh. "And now I have taken it, not poppy nor mandragora, nor all the drowsy syrups in his shop (hang him!) will be able to medicine me to sleep for some time to come!"

"She has no heart, sir. I don't think she cares for t'other chap much," groans the gloomy butler. "She can't, after having known *us*"—and my companion in grief, laying down my hot-water jug, retreats.

I did not cut any part of myself with my razor. I shaved quite calmly. I went to the family at breakfast. My impression is I was sarcastic and witty. I smiled most kindly at Miss Prior when she came in. Nobody could have seen from my outward behaviour that anything was wrong within. I was an apple. Could you inspect the worm at my core? No, no. Somebody, I think old Baker, complimented me on my good looks. I was a smiling lake. Could you see on my placid surface, amongst my sheeny water-lilies, that a corpse was lying under my cool depths? "A bit of devilled chicken?" "No, thank you. By the way, Lovel, I think I must go to town to-day." "You'll come back to dinner, of course?" "Well—no." "Oh, stuff! You promised

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me to-day and to-morrow. Robinson, Brown, and Jones are coming to-morrow, and you must be here to meet them." Thus we prattle on. I answer, I smile, I say, "Yes, if you please, another cup," or, "Be so good as to hand the muffin," or what not. But I am dead. I feel as if I am under ground, and buried. Life, and tea, and clatter, and muffins are going on, of course; and daisies spring and the sun shines on the grass whilst I am under it. Ah, dear me! it's very cruel: it's very very lonely: it's very odd! I don't belong to the world any more. I have done with it. I am shelved away. But my spirit returns and flitters through the world, which it has no longer anything to do with: and my ghost, as it were, comes and smiles at my own tombstone. Here lies Charles Batchelor, the Unloved One. Oh! alone, alone, alone! Why, Fate! didst thou ordain that I should be companionless? Tell me where the Wandering Jew is, that I may go and sit with him. Is there any place at a lighthouse vacant? Who knows where is the Island of Juan Fernandez? Engage me a ship and take me there at once. Mr. R. Crusoe, I think? My dear Robinson, have the kindness to hand me over your goatskin cap, breeches, and umbrella. Go home, and leave *me* here. Would you know who is the solitariest man on earth? That man am I. Was that cutlet which I ate at breakfast anon, was that lamb which frisked on the mead last week (beyond yon wall where the unconscious cucumber lay basking which was to form his sauce)—I say was that lamb made so tender that I might eat him? And my heart, then? Poor heart! wert thou so softly constituted only that women might stab thee? So I am a Muff, am I? And she will always wear a lock of his "dear hair," will she? Ha! ha! The men on the omnibus looked askance as they saw me laugh. They thought it was from Hanwell, not Putney, I was escaping. Escape? Who can escape? I went into London. I went to the Clubs. Jawkins, of course, was there; and my impression is that he talked as usual. I took another omnibus, and went back to Putney. "I will go back and revisit my grave," I thought. It is said that ghosts loiter about their former haunts a good deal when they are first dead; flit wistfully among their old friends and companions, and, I daresay, expect to hear a plenty of conversation and friendly tearful remark about themselves. But suppose they return, and find nobody talking of them at all? Or suppose, Hamlet (Père, and Royal Dane) comes back and finds Claudius and Gertrude very comfortable over a piece of cold meat, or what not? Is the late gentleman's present position as a ghost a very pleasant one? Crow, Cocks! Quick, Sundawn! Open, Trap-door! *Allons*: it's best to pop underground again. So I am a Muff, am I? What

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a curious thing that walk up the hill to the house was! What a different place Shrublands was yesterday to what it is to-day! Has the sun lost its light, and the flowers their bloom, and the joke its sparkle, and the dish its savour? Why, bless my soul! what is Lizzie herself—only an ordinary woman—freckled certainly—incorrigibly dull, and without a scintillation of humour; and you mean to say, Charles Batchelor, that your heart once beat about *that* woman? Under the intercepted letter of that cold assassin, my heart had fallen down dead, irretrievably dead. I remember, *à propos* of the occasion of my first death, that perpetrated by Glorvina—on my second visit to Dublin—with what a strange sensation I walked under some trees in the Phœnix Park beneath which it had been my custom to meet my False One Number 1. There were the trees—there were the birds singing—there was the bench on which we used to sit—the same, but how different! The trees had a different foliage, exquisite amaranthine; the birds sang a song paradisiacal; the bench was a bank of roses and fresh flowers, which young Love twined in fragrant chaplets around the statue of Glorvina. Roses and fresh flowers? Rheumatisms and flannel-waistcoats, you silly old man! Foliage and Song? O namby-pamby driveller! A statue?—a doll, thou twaddling old dullard!—a doll with carmine cheeks, and a heart stuffed with bran—I say, on the night preceding that ride to and from Putney, I had undergone death—in that omnibus I had been carried over to t'other side of the Stygian shore. I returned but as a passionless ghost, remembering my life-days, but not feeling any more. Love was dead, Elizabeth! Why, the Doctor came, and partook freely of lunch, and I was not angry. Yesterday I called him names, and hated him, and was jealous of him. To-day I felt no rivalship; and no envy at his success; and no desire to supplant him. No—I swear—not the slightest wish to make Elizabeth mine if she would. I might have cared for her yesterday—yesterday I had a heart. Psha! my good sir or madam. You sit by me at dinner. Perhaps you are handsome, and use your eyes. Ogle away. Don't baulk yourself, pray. But if you fancy I care a threepenny-piece about you—or for your eyes—or for your bonny brown hair—or for your sentimental remarks, sidelong warbled—or for your praise to (not of) my face—or for your satire behind my back—ah me!—how mistaken you are! *Peine perdue, ma chère dame!* The digestive organs are still in good working order—but the heart! *Caret.*

I was perfectly civil to Mr. Drencher, and, indeed, wonder to think how in my irritation I had allowed myself to apply (mentally) any sort of disagreeable phrases to a most excellent and deserving and good-looking young man, who is beloved by

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the poor, and has won the just confidence of an extensive circle of patients. I made no sort of remark to Miss Prior, except about the weather and the flowers in the garden. I was bland, easy, rather pleasant, not too high-spirited, you understand.—No: I vow you could not have seen a nerve wince, or the slightest alteration in my demeanour. I helped the two old dowagers; I listened to their twaddle; I gaily wiped up with my napkin three-quarters of a glass of sherry which Popham flung over my trousers. I would defy you to know that I had gone through the ticklish operation of an excision of the heart a few hours previously. Heart—pooh! I saw Miss Prior's lip quiver. Without a word between us, she knew perfectly well that all was over as regarded her late humble servant. *She* winced once or twice. While Drencher was busy with his plate, the grey eyes cast towards me interjectional looks of puzzled entreaty. *She*, I say, winced; and I give you my word I did not care a fig whether she was sorry, or pleased, or happy, or going to be hanged. And I can't give a better proof of my utter indifference about the matter, than the fact that I wrote two or three copies of verses descriptive of my despair. They appeared, you may perhaps remember, in one of the annuals of those days, and were generally attributed to one of the most sentimental of our young poets. I remember the reviews said they were "replete with emotion," "full of passionate and earnest feeling," and so forth. Feeling, indeed!—ha! ha! "Passionate outbursts of a grief-stricken heart!"—Passionate scrapings of a fiddle-stick, my good friend. "Lonely" of course rhymes with "only," and "gushes" with "blushes," and "despair" with "hair," and so on. Despair is perfectly compatible with a good dinner, I promise you. Hair is false: hearts are false. Grapes may be sour, but claret is good, my masters. Do you suppose I am going to cry my eyes out, because Chloe's are turned upon Strephon? If you find any whimpering in mine, may they never wink at a bee's-wing again.

When the Doctor rose presently, saying he would go and see the gardener's child, who was ill, and casting longing looks at Miss Prior, I assure you I did not feel a tittle of jealousy, though Miss Bessy actually followed Mr. Drencher on to the lawn, under the pretext of calling back Miss Cissy, who had run thither without her bonnet.

"Now, Lady Baker, which was right? you or I?" asks bonny Mrs. Bonnington, wagging her head towards the lawn where this couple of innocents were disporting.

"You thought there was an affair between Miss Prior and the medical gentleman," I say, smiling. "It was no secret, Mrs. Bonnington."

"Yes, but there were others who were a little smitten in that

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quarter too," says Lady Baker; and she in turn wags *her* old head towards me.

"You mean me?" I answer, as innocent as a new-born babe. "I am a burnt child, Lady Baker; I have been at the fire, and am already thoroughly done, thank you. One of your charming sex jilted me some years ago; and once is quite enough, I am much obliged to you."

This I said, not because it was true; in fact, it was the reverse of truth; but if I chose to lie about my own affairs, pray, why not? And though a strictly truth-telling man generally, when I do lie, I promise you I do it boldly and well.

"If, as I gather from Mrs. Bonnington, Mr. Drencher and Miss Prior like each other, I wish my old friend joy. I wish Mr. Drencher joy with all my heart. The match seems to me excellent. He is a deserving, a clever, and a handsome young fellow; and I am sure, ladies, you can bear witness to *her* goodness, after all you have known of her."

"My dear Batchelor," says Mrs. Bonnington, still smiling and winking, "I don't believe one single word you say—not one single word!" And she looks infinitely pleased as she speaks.

"Oh!" cries Lady Baker, "my good Mrs. Bonnington, you are always match-making — don't contradict me. You know you thought——"

"Oh, please don't," cries Mrs. B.

"I will. She thought, Mr. Batchelor, she actually thought that our son, that my Cecilia's husband, was smitten by the governess. I should like to have seen him dare!" and her flashing eyes turn towards the late Mrs. Lovel's portrait, with its faded simper leering over the harp. "The idea that any woman could succeed that angel, indeed!"

"Indeed, I don't envy her," I said.

"You don't mean, Batchelor, that my Frederick would not make any woman happy!" cries the Bonnington. "He's only seven-and-thirty, very young for his age, and the most affectionate of creatures. I am surprised, and it's most cruel, and most unkind of you, to say that you don't envy any woman that marries my boy!"

"My dear good Mrs. Bonnington, you quite misapprehend me," I remark.

"Why, when his late wife was alive," goes on Mrs. B., sobbing, "you know with what admirable sweetness and gentleness he bore her—her—bad temper—excuse me, Lady Baker!"

"Oh, pray, abuse my departed angel!" cries the Baker; "say that your son should marry and forget her—say that those darlings

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should be made to forget their mother. She was a woman of birth, and a woman of breeding, and a woman of family, and the Bakers came in with the Conqueror, Mrs. Bonnington——"

"I think I heard of one in the Court of Pharaoh," I interposed.

"And to say that a Baker is not worthy of a Lovel is *pretty* news indeed! Do you hear *that*, Clarence?"

"Hear what, ma'am?" says Clarence, who enters at this juncture. "You're speakin' loud enough—though bleaht if I hear two sh-shyllables."

"You wretched boy, you have been smoking!"

"Shmoking—haven't I?" says Clarence with a laugh; "and I've been at the 'Five Bells,' and I've been having a game of billiards with an old friend of mine," and he lurches towards a decanter.

"Ah! don't drink any more, my child!" cries the mother.

"I'm as sober as a judge, I tell you. You leave so precious little in the bottle at dinner, that I must get it when I can, mustn't I, Batchelor, old boy? We had a row yesterday, hadn't we? No, it was sugar-baker. I'm not angry—you're not angry. Bear no malish. Here's your health, old boy!"

The unhappy gentleman drank his bumper of sherry, and, tossing his hair off his head, said—"Where's the governess—where's Bessy Bellenden? Who's that kickin' me under the table, I say?"

"Where is who?" asks his mother.

"Bessy Bellenden—the governess—that's her real name. Known her these ten years. Used to dansh at Prinsh's Theatre. Remember her in the corps-de-ballet. Ushed to go behind the shenes. Dooshid pretty girl!" maunders out the tipsy youth; and as the unconscious subject of his mischievous talk enters the room, again he cries out, "Come and sit by me, Bessy Bellenden, I say!"

The matrons rose with looks of horror in their faces. "A ballet-dancer!" cries Mrs. Bonnington. "A ballet-dancer!" echoes Lady Baker. "Young woman, is this true?"

"The Bulbul and the Roshe—hay?" laughs the Captain. "Don't you remember you and Fosbery in blue and shpangles? Always all right, though, Bellenden was. Fosbery washn't: but Bellenden was. Give you every credit for that, Bellenden. Boxsh my ears. Bear no malish—no—no—malish! Get some more sherry, you—whatsh your name—Bedford, butler—and I'll pay you the money I owe you." And he laughs his wild laugh, utterly unconscious of the effect he is producing. Bedford stands staring at him as pale as death. Poor Miss Prior is as white as marble. Wrath, terror, and wonder are in the countenances of the dowagers. It is an awful scene!

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"Mr. Batchelor knows that it was to help my family I did it," says the poor governess.

"Yes, by George! and nobody can say a word against her," bursts in Dick Bedford, with a sob; "and she is as honest as any woman here."

"Pray, who told you to put your oar in?" cries the tipsy Captain.

"And you knew that this person was on the stage, and you introduced her into my son's family? Oh, Mr. Batchelor, Mr. Batchelor, I didn't think it of you! Don't speak to me, miss!" cries the flurried Bonnington.

"You brought this woman to the children of my adored Cecilia?" calls out the other dowager. "Serpent, leave the room! Pack your trunks, viper! and quit the house this instant. Don't touch her, Cissy. Come to me, my blessing. Go away, you horrid wretch!"

"She ain't a horrid wretch; and when I was ill she was very good to us," breaks in Pop, with a roar of tears: "and you shan't go, Miss Prior—my dear pretty Miss Prior. You shan't go!" and the child rushes up to the governess, and covers her neck with tears and kisses.

"Leave her, Popham, my darling blessing!—leave that woman!" cries Lady Baker.

"I won't, you old beast!—and she sha-a-an't go. And I wish you was dead—and, my dear, you shan't go, and pa shan't let you!" shouts the boy.

"Oh, Popham, if Miss Prior has been naughty, Miss Prior must go!" says Cecilia, tossing up her head.

"Spoken like my daughter's child!" cries Lady Baker: and little Cissy, having flung her little stone, looks as if she had performed a very virtuous action.

"God bless you, Master Pop—you are a trump, you are!" says Mr. Bedford.

"Yes, that I am, Bedford; and she shan't go, shall she?" cries the boy.

But Bessy stooped down sadly and kissed him. "Yes, I must, dear," she said.

"Don't touch him! Come away, sir! Come away from her this moment!" shrieked the two mothers.

"I nursed him through the scarlet fever, when his own mother would not come near him," says Elizabeth gently.

"I'm blest if she didn't," sobs Bedford—"and—bub—bub—bless you, Master Pop!"

"That child is wicked enough, and headstrong enough, and rude

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enough already!" exclaims Lady Baker. "I desire, young woman, you will not pollute him further!"

"That's a hard word to say to an honest woman, ma'am," says Bedford.

"Pray, miss, are you engaged to the butler, too?" hisses out the dowager.

"There's very little the matter with Barnet's child — only teeth—— What on earth has happened? My dear Lizzie—my dear Miss Prior—what is it?" cries the Doctor, who enters from the garden at this juncture.

"Nothing has happened, only this young woman has appeared in a new *character*," says Lady Baker. "My son has just informed us that Miss Prior danced upon the stage, Mr. Drencher; and if you think such a person is a fit companion for your mother and sisters, who attend a place of Christian worship, I believe—I wish you joy."

"Is this—is this—true?" asks the Doctor, with a look of bewilderment.

"Yes, it is true," sighs the girl.

"And you never told me, Elizabeth?" groans the Doctor.

"She's as honest as any woman here," calls out Bedford. "She gave all the money to her family."

"It wasn't fair not to tell me. It wasn't fair," sobs the Doctor. And he gives her a ghastly parting look, and turns his back.

"I say, you—Hi! What-d'you-call-'im? Sawbones!" shrieks out Captain Clarence. "Come back, I say. She's all right, I say. Upon my honour, now, she's all right."

"Miss P. shouldn't have kept this from me. My mother and sisters are Dissenters, and very strict. I couldn't ask a party into my family who has been—who has been——I wish you good morning," says the Doctor, and stalks away.

"And now, will you please to get your things ready, and go too?" continues Lady Baker. "My dear Mrs. Bonnington, you think——"

"Certainly, certainly, she must go!" cries Mrs. Bonnington.

"Don't go till Lovel comes home, miss. *These* ain't your mistresses. Lady Baker don't pay your salary. If you go, I go, too. There!" calls out Bedford, and mumbles something in her ear about "the end of the world."

"You go, too; and a good riddance, you insolent brute!" exclaims the dowager.

"Oh, Captain Clarence! you have made a pretty morning's work," I say.

"I don't know what the dooce all the sherry—all the shinty's

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about," says the Captain, playing with the empty decanter. "Gal's a very good gal—pretty gal. If she chooseth dansh shport her family, why the doosh shouldn't she dansh shport a family?"

"That is exactly what I recommend this person to do," says Lady Baker, tossing up her head. "And now I will thank you to leave the room. Do you hear?"

As poor Elizabeth obeyed this order, Bedford darted after her; and I know ere she had gone five steps he had offered her his savings and everything he had. She might have had mine yesterday. But she had deceived me. She had played fast and loose with me. She had misled me about this Doctor. I could trust her no more. My love of yesterday was dead, I say. That vase was broken which never could be mended. She knew all was over between us. She did not once look at me as she left the room.

The two dowagers—one of them, I think, a little alarmed at her victory—left the house, and for once went away in the same barouche. The young maniac who had been the cause of the mischief staggered away, I know not whither.

About four o'clock, poor little Pinhorn, the children's maid, came to me, well-nigh choking with tears, as she handed me a letter. "She's goin' away—and she saved both them children's lives, she did. And she've wrote to you, sir. And Bedford's a-goin'. And I'll give warnin', I will, too!" And the weeping handmaiden retires, leaving me, perhaps somewhat frightened, with the letter in my hand.

"Dear sir," she said—"I may write you a line of thanks and farewell. I shall go to my mother. I shall soon find another place. Poor Bedford, who has a generous heart, told me that he had given you a letter of mine to Mr. D——. I saw this morning that you knew everything. I can only say now that for all your long kindnesses and friendship to my family I am always your sincere and grateful—E. P."

Yes: that was all. I think she *was* grateful. But she had not been candid with me, nor with the poor surgeon. I had no anger: far from it: a great deal of regard and goodwill, nay admiration, for the intrepid girl who had played a long hard part very cheerfully and bravely. But my foolish little flicker of love had blazed up and gone out in a day; I knew that she never could care for me. In that dismal wakeful night, after reading the letter, I had thought her character and story over, and seen to what a life of artifice and dissimulation necessity had compelled her. I did not blame her. In such circumstances, with such a family, how could she be frank and open? Poor thing! poor thing! Do we know anybody? Ah! dear me, we are most of us

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very lonely in the world. You who have any who love you, cling to them, and thank God. I went into the hall towards evening: her poor trunks and packages were there, and the little nursery-maid weeping over them. The sight unmanned me; and I believe I cried myself. Poor Elizabeth! And with these small chests you recommence your life's lonely voyage! I gave the girl a couple of sovereigns. She sobbed a God bless me! and burst out crying more desperately than ever. Thou hast a kind heart, little Pinhorn!

"'Miss Prior—to be called for.' Whose trunks are these?" says Lovel, coming from the City. The dowagers drove up at the same moment.

"Didn't you see us from the omnibus, Frederick?" cries her Ladyship coaxingly. "We followed behind you all the way!";

"We were in the barouche, my dear," remarks Mrs. Bonnington rather nervously.

"Whose trunks are these?—what's the matter?—and what's the girl crying for?" asks Lovel.

"Miss Prior is a-going away," sobs Pinhorn.

"Miss Prior going? Is this your doing, my Lady Baker?—or yours, mother?" the master of the house says sternly.

"She is going, my love, because she cannot stay in this family," says mamma.

"That woman is no fit companion for my angel's children, Frederick!" cries Lady B.

"That person has deceived us all, my love!" says mamma.

"Deceived?—how? Deceived whom?" continues Mr. Lovel, more and more hotly.

"Clarence, love! come down, dear! Tell Mr. Lovel everything. Come down and tell him this moment," cries Lady Baker to her son, who at this moment appears on the corridor which was round the hall.

"What's the row now, pray?" And Captain Clarence descends, breaking his shins over poor Elizabeth's trunks, and calling down on them his usual maledictions.

"Tell Mr. Lovel where you saw that—that person, Clarence. Now, sir, listen to my Cecilia's brother!"

"Saw her—saw her in blue and spangles, in the 'Rose and the Bulbul,' at the Prince's Theatre—and a doosid 'nice-looking girl she was too!" says the Captain.

"There, sir!"

"There, Frederick!" cry the matrons in a breath.

"And what then?" asks Lovel.

"Mercy! you ask, What then, Frederick? Do you know

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what a theatre is? Tell Frederick what a theatre is, Mr. Batchelor, and that my grandchildren must not be educated by——"

"My grandchildren—my Cecilia's children," shrieks the other, "must not be pol-luted by——"

"Silence!" I say. "Have you a word against her—have you, pray, Baker?"

"No. 'Gad! I never said a word against her," says the Captain. "No, hang me, you know—but——"

"But suppose I knew the fact the whole time?" asks Lovel, with rather a blush on his cheek. "Suppose I knew that she danced to give her family bread? Suppose I knew that she toiled and laboured to support her parents, and brothers and sisters? Suppose I know that out of her pittance she has continued to support them? Suppose I know that she watched my own children through fever and danger? For these reasons I must turn her out of doors, must I? No, by Heaven! No!—Elizabeth!—Miss Prior!—Come down!—Come here, I beg you!"

The governess, arrayed as for departure, at this moment appeared on the corridor running round the hall. As Lovel continued to speak very loud and resolute, she came down looking deadly pale.

Still much excited, the widower went up to her and took her hand. "Dear Miss Prior!" he said—"dear Elizabeth! you have been the best friend of me and mine. You tended my wife in illness, you took care of my children in fever and danger. You have been an admirable sister, daughter in your own family—and for this, and for these benefits conferred upon us, my relatives— my mother-in-law —would drive you out of my doors! It shall not be!—by heavens, it shall not be!"

You should have seen little Bedford sitting on the governess's box, shaking his fist, and crying "Hurrah!" as his master spoke. By this time the loud voices and the altercation in the hall had brought a half-dozen of servants from their quarters into the hall. "Go away, all of you!" shouts Lovel; and the domestic *posse* retires, Bedford being the last to retreat, and nodding approval at his master as he backs out of the room.

"You are very good, and kind, and generous, sir," says the pale Elizabeth, putting a handkerchief to her eyes. "But without the confidence of these ladies, I must not stay, Mr. Lovel. God bless you for your goodness to me. I must, if you please, return to my mother."

The worthy gentleman looked fiercely round at the two elder women, and again seizing the governess's hand, said—"Elizabeth! dear Elizabeth! I implore you not to go! If you love the children——"

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"Oh, sir!" (A cambric veil covers Miss Prior's emotion, and the expression of her face, on this ejaculation.)

"If you love the children," gasps out the widower, "stay with them. If you have a regard for—for their father"—(Timanthes, where is thy pocket-handkerchief?)—"remain in this house, with such a title as none can question. Be the mistress of it."

"His mistress—and before me!" screams Lady Baker. "Mrs. Bonnington, this depravity is monstrous!"

"Be my wife, dear Elizabeth!" the widower continues. "Continue to watch over the children, who shall be motherless no more."

"Frederick! Frederick! haven't they got *us?*" shrieks one of the old ladies.

"Oh, my poor dear Lady Baker!" says Mrs. Bonnington.

"Oh, my poor dear Mrs. Bonnington!" says Lady Baker.

"Frederick, listen to your mother," implores Mrs. Bonnington.

"To your mothers," sobs Lady Baker.

And they both go down on their knees, and I heard a boohoo of a guffaw behind the green-baized servants' door, where I have no doubt Monsieur Bedford was posted.

"Ah, Batchelor! dear Batchelor, speak to him!" cries good Mrs. Bonny. "We are praying this child, Batchelor—this child whom you used to know at College, and when he was a good gentle obedient boy. You have influence with my poor Frederick. Exert it for his heartbroken mother's sake; and you shall have my bubble-ubble-essings, you shall."

"My dear good lady," I exclaim—not liking to see the kind soul in grief.

"Send for Doctor Straightwaist! Order him to pause in his madness," cries Baker; "or it is I, Cecilia's mother, the mother of that murdered angel, that shall go mad."

"Angel? *Allons!*" I say. "Since his widowhood, you have never given the poor fellow any peace. You have been for ever quarrelling with him. You took possession of his house; bullied his servants; spoiled his children—you did, Lady Baker."

"Sir," cries her Ladyship, "you are a low, presuming, vulgar man! Clarence, beat this rude man!"

"Nay," I say, "there must be no more quarrelling to-day. And I am sure Captain Baker will not molest me. Miss Prior, I am delighted that my old friend should have found a woman of good sense, good conduct, good temper—a woman who has had many trials, and borne them with very great patience—to take charge of him, and make him happy. I congratulate you both. Miss Prior has borne poverty so well that I am certain she will bear good fortune, for it

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is good fortune to become the wife of such a loyal, honest, kindly gentleman as Frederick Lovel."

After such a speech as that, I think I may say, *liberavi animam*. Not one word of complaint, you see, not a hint about "Edward," not a single sarcasm, though I might have launched some terrific shots out of my quiver, and have made Lovel and his bride-elect writhe before me. But what is the need of spoiling sport? Shall I growl out of my sulky manger because my comrade gets the meat? Eat it, happy dog! and be thankful. Would not that bone have choked me if I had tried it? Besides, I am accustomed to disappointment. Other fellows get the prizes which I try for. I am used to run second in the dreary race of love. Second? Psha! Third, Fourth. *Que sais-je?* There was the Bombay captain in Bess's early days. There was Edward. Here is Frederick. Go to, Charles Batchelor; repine not at fortune: but be content to be Batchelor still. My sister has children. I will be an uncle, a parent to them. Isn't Edward of the scarlet whiskers distanced? Has not poor Dick Bedford lost the race—poor Dick, who never had a chance, and is the best of us all? Besides, what fun it is to see Lady Baker deposed: think of Mrs. Prior coming in and reigning over her! The purple-faced old fury of a Baker, never will she bully, and rage, and trample more. She must pack up her traps and be off. I know she must. I *can* congratulate Lovel sincerely, and that's the fact.

And here at this very moment, and as if to add to the comicality of the scene, who should appear but mother-in-law No. 2, Mrs. Prior, with her Bluecoat boy, and two or three of her children, who had been invited, or had invited themselves, to drink tea with Lovel's young ones, as their custom was whenever they could procure an invitation. Master Prior had a fine "copy" under his arm, which he came to show to his patron Lovel. His mamma, entirely ignorant of what had happened, came fawning in with her old poke-bonnet, her old pocket, that vast depository of all sorts of stores, her old umbrella, and her usual dreary smirk. She made her obeisance to the matrons,—she led up her Bluecoat boy to Mr. Lovel, in whose office she hoped to find a clerk's place for her lad, on whose very coat and waistcoat she had designs whilst they were yet on his back: and she straightway began business with the dowagers—

"My Lady, I hope your Ladyship is quite well?" (a curtsey). "Dear kind Mrs. Bonnington! I came to pay my duty to you, mum. This is Louisa, my Lady, the great girl for whom your Ladyship so kindly promised the gown. And this is my little girl, Mrs. Bonnington, mum, please; and this is my big Blue. Go and

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speak to dear kind Mr. Lovel, Gus, our dear good friend and protector,—the son and son-in-law of these dear ladies. Look, sir, he has brought his copy to show you; and it's creditable to a boy of his age, isn't it, Mr. Batchelor? You can say, who know so well what writing is, and my kind services to you, sir—and—Elizabeth, Lizzie, my dear! where's your spectacles, you—you——"

Here she stopped, and looking alarmed at the group, at the boxes, at the blushing Lovel, at the pale countenance of the governess, "Gracious goodness!" she said, "what has happened? Tell me, Lizzie, what is it?"

"Is this collusion, pray?" says ruffled Mrs. Bonnington.

"Collusion, dear Mrs. Bonnington?"

"Or insolence?" bawls out my Lady Baker.

"Insolence, your Ladyship? What—what is it? What are these boxes—Lizzie's boxes? Ah!" the mother broke out with a scream, "you've not sent the poor girl away? Oh! my poor child—my poor children!"

"The Prince's Theatre has come out, Mrs. Prior," here said I.

The mother clasps her meagre hands. "It wasn't the darling's fault. It was to help her poor father in poverty. It was I who forced her to it. Oh, ladies! ladies!—don't take the bread out of the mouth of these poor orphans!"—and genuine tears rained down her yellow cheeks.

"Enough of this," says Mr. Lovel haughtily. "Mrs. Prior, your daughter is not going away. Elizabeth has promised to stay with me, and never to leave me—as governess no longer, but as——" and here he takes Miss Prior's hand.

"His wife! Is this—is this true, Lizzie?" gasped the mother.

"Yes, mamma," meekly said Miss Elizabeth Prior.

At this the old woman flung down her umbrella, and uttering a fine scream, folds Elizabeth in her arms, and then runs up to Lovel! "My son! my son!" says she (Lovel's face was not bad, I promise you, at this salutation and salute). "Come here, children!—come, Augustus, Fanny, Louisa, kiss your dear brother, children! And where are yours, Lizzie? Where are Pop and Cissy? Go and look for your little nephew and niece, dears: Pop and Cissy in the schoolroom, or in the garden, dears. They will be your nephew and niece now. Go and fetch them, I say."

As the young Priors filed off, Mrs. Prior turned to the two other matrons, and spoke to them with much dignity: "Most hot weather, your Ladyship, I'm sure! Mr. Bonnington must find it very hot for preaching, Mrs. Bonnington? Lor'! there's that little wretch beating my Johnny on the stairs. Have done, Pop, sir! How ever shall we make those children agree, Elizabeth?"

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Quick, come to me, some skilful delineator of the British dowager, and draw me the countenances of Lady Baker and Mrs. Bonnington.

"I call this a jolly game, don't you, Batchelor, old boy?" remarks the Captain to me. "Lady Baker, my dear, I guess your Ladyship's nose is out of joint."

"O Cecilia—Cecilia! don't you shudder in your grave?" cries Lady B. "Call my people, Clarence—call Bulkeley—call my maid! Let me go, I say, from this house of horror!" and the old lady dashed into the drawing-room, where she uttered I know not what incoherent shrieks and appeals before that calm, glazed, simpering portrait of the departed Cecilia.

Now this is a truth, for which I call Lovel, his lady, Mrs. Bonnington, and Captain Clarence Baker as witnesses. Well, then, whilst Lady B. was adjuring the portrait, it is a fact that a string of Cecilia's harp—which has always been standing in the corner of the room under its shroud of Cordovan leather—a string, I say, of Cecilia's harp cracked, and went off with a loud *bong*, which struck terror into all beholders. Lady Baker's agitation at the incident was awful; I do not like to describe it—not having any wish to say anything tragic in this narrative—though that I *can* write tragedy, plays of mine (of which envious managers never could be got to see the merit) I think will prove, when they appear in my posthumous works.

Baker has always averred that at the moment when the harp-string broke, her heart broke too. But as she lived for many years, and may be alive now for what I know; and as she borrowed money repeatedly from Lovel—he must be acquitted of the charge which she constantly brings against him of hastening her own death, and murdering his first wife Cecilia. "The harp that once in Tara's halls" used to make such a piteous feeble thrumming, has been carted off I know not whither; and Cecilia's portrait, though it has been removed from the post of honour (where, you conceive, under present circumstances it would hardly be *à propos*), occupies a very reputable position in the pink room upstairs which that poor young Clarence inhabited during my visit to Shrublands.

All the house has been altered. There's a fine organ in the hall, on which Elizabeth performs sacred music very finely. As for *my* old room, I will trouble you to smoke *there* under the present government. It is a library now, with many fine and authentic pictures of the Lovel family hanging up in it, the English branch of the house with the wolf crest, and *Gare à la louve* for the motto, and a grand posthumous portrait of a Portuguese officer (Gandish), Elizabeth's late father.

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As for dear old Mrs. Bonnington, she, you may be sure, would be easily reconciled to any live mortal who was kind to her, and any plan which should make her son happy; and Elizabeth has quite won her over. Mrs. Prior, on the deposition of the other dowagers, no doubt expected to reign at Shrublands, but in this object I am not very sorry to say was disappointed. Indeed, I was not a little amused, upon the very first day of her intended reign—that eventful one of which we have been describing the incidents—to see how calmly and gracefully Bessy pulled the throne from under her, on which the old lady was clambering.

Mrs. P. knew the house very well, and everything which it contained; and when Lady Baker drove off with her son and her suite of domestics, Prior dashed through the vacant apartments gleaning what had been left in the flurry of departure—a scarlet feather out of the dowager's room, a shirt-stud and a bottle of hair-oil, the Captain's property. "And now they are gone, and as you can't be alone with him, my dear, I must be with you," says she, coming down to her daughter.

"Of course, mamma, I must be with you," says obedient Elizabeth.

"And there is the pink room, and the blue room, and the yellow room for the boys—and the chintz boudoir for me—I can put them all away, oh, so comfortably!"

"I can come and share Louisa's room, mamma," says Bessy. "It will not be proper for me to stay here at all—until afterwards, you know. Or I can go to my uncle at Saint Boniface. Don't you think that will be best, eh, Frederick?"

"Whatever you wish, my dear Lizzie!" says Lovel.

"And I daresay there will be some little alterations made in the house. You talked, you know, of painting, Mr. Lovel: and the children can go to their grandmamma Bonnington. And on our return when the alterations are made we shall always be delighted to see *you*, Mr. Batchelor—our kindest old friend. Shall we not, Frederick?"

"Always, always," said Frederick.

"Come, children, come to your teas," calls out Mrs. P. in a resolute voice.

"Dear Pop, I'm not going away—that is, only for a few days, dear," says Bessy, kissing the boy; "and you will love me, won't you?"

"All right," says the boy. But Cissy said, when the same appeal was made to her: "I shall love my dear mamma!" and makes her new mother-in-law a very polite curtsey.

"I think you had better put off those men you expect to dinner to-morrow, Fred," I say to Lovel.

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"I think I had, Batch," says the gentleman.

"Or you can dine with them at the Club, you know," remarks Elizabeth.

"Yes, Bessy."

"And when the children have had their tea I will go with mamma. My boxes are ready, you know," says arch Bessy.

"And you will stay and dine with Mr. Lovel, won't you, Mr. Batchelor?" asks the lady.

It was the dreariest dinner I ever had in my life. No undertaker could be more gloomy than Bedford, as he served us. We tried to talk politics and literature. We drank too much, purposely. Nothing would do. "Hang me, if I can stand this, Lovel," I said, as we sat mum over our third bottle. "I will go back and sleep at my chambers. I was not a little soft upon her myself, that's the truth. Here's her health, and happiness to both of you, with all my heart." And we drained a great bumper apiece, and I left him. He was very happy I should go.

Bedford stood at the gate, as the little pony carriage came for me in the dusk. "God bless you, sir!" says he. "I can't stand it; I shall go too." And he rubbed his hands over his eyes.

He married Mary Pinhorn, and they have emigrated to Melbourne; whence he sent me, three years ago, an affectionate letter, and a smart gold pin from the diggings.

A month afterwards, a cab might have been seen driving from the Temple to Hanover Square: and a month and a day after that drive, an advertisement might have been read in the *Post* and *Times*:—

"Married, on Thursday, 10th, at St. George's, Hanover Square, by the Reverend the Master of Saint Boniface College, Oxbridge, uncle of the bride, Frederick Lovel, Esquire, of Shrublands, Roehampton, to Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the late Captain Montagu Prior, K.S.F."

We may hear of LOVEL MARRIED some other day, but here is an end of LOVEL THE WIDOWER. *Valete et plaudite*, you good people, who have witnessed the little comedy. Down with the curtain; cover up the boxes; pop out the gas-lights. Ho! cab! Take us home, and let us have some tea, and go to bed. Good-night, my little players. We have been merry together, and we part with soft hearts and somewhat rueful countenances, don't we?

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ROUNDABOUT PAPERS

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ROUNDABOUT PAPERS

ON A LAZY IDLE BOY

I HAD occasion to pass a week in the autumn in the little old town of Coire or Chur, in the Grisons, where lies buried that very ancient British king, saint, and martyr, Lucius,* who founded the Church of Saint Peter, on Cornhill. Few people note the church nowadays, and fewer ever heard of the saint. In the cathedral at Chur, his statue appears surrounded by other sainted persons of his family. With tight red breeches, a Roman habit, a curly brown beard, and a neat little gilt crown and sceptre, he stands, a very comely and cheerful image: and, from what I may call his peculiar position with regard to Cornhill, I beheld this figure of Saint Lucius with more interest than I should have bestowed upon personages who, hierarchically, are, I daresay, his superiors.

The pretty little city stands, so to speak, at the end of the world—of the world of to-day, the world of rapid motion, and rushing railways, and the commerce and intercourse of men. From the northern gate, the iron road stretches away to Zürich, to Basle, to Paris, to home. From the old southern barriers, before which a little river rushes, and around which stretch the crumbling battlements of the ancient town, the road bears the slow diligence or lagging vetturino by the shallow Rhine, through the awful gorges of the Via Mala, and presently over the Splügen to the shores of Como.

I have seldom seen a place more quaint, pretty, calm, and pastoral than this remote little Chur. What need have the inhabitants of walls and ramparts, except to build summer-houses, to trail

* Stow quotes the inscription, still extant, "from the table fast chained in St. Peter's Church, Cornhill;" and says, "he was after some chronicle buried at London, and after some chronicle buried at Glowcester"—but, oh! these incorrect chroniclers! when Alban Butler, in the "Lives of the Saints," v. xii., and Murray's "Handbook," and the Sacristan at Chur, all say Lucius was killed there, and I saw his tomb with my own eyes!

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vines, and hang clothes to dry on them? No enemies approach the great mouldering gates: only at morn and even the cows come lowing past them, the village maidens chatter merrily round the fountains, and babble like the ever-voluble stream that flows under the old walls. The schoolboys, with book and satchel, in smart uniforms, march up to the gymnasium, and return thence at their stated time. There is one coffee-house in the town, and I see one old gentleman goes to it. There are shops with no customers seemingly, and the lazy tradesmen look out of their little windows at the single stranger sauntering by. There is a stall with baskets of queer little black grapes and apples, and a pretty brisk trade with half-a-dozen urchins standing round. But, beyond this, there is scarce any talk or movement in the street. There's nobody at the book-shop. "If you will have the goodness to come again in an hour," says the banker, with his mouthful of dinner at one o'clock, "you can have the money." There is nobody at the hotel save the good landlady, the kind waiters, the brisk young cook who ministers to you. Nobody is in the Protestant church—(oh! strange sight, the two confessions are here at peace!)—nobody in the Catholic church: until the sacristan, from his snug abode in the cathedral close, espies the traveller eyeing the monsters and pillars before the old shark-toothed arch of his cathedral, and comes out (with a view to remuneration possibly) and opens the gate, and shows you the venerable church, and the queer old relics in the sacristy, and the ancient vestments (a black velvet cope, amongst other robes, as fresh as yesterday, and presented by that notorious "pervert," Henry of Navarre and France), and the statue of Saint Lucius who built Saint Peter's Church, on Cornhill.

What a quiet, kind, quaint, pleasant, pretty old town! Has it been asleep these hundreds and hundreds of years, and is the brisk young Prince of the Sidereal Realms in his screaming car drawn by his snorting steel elephant coming to waken it? Time was when there must have been life and bustle and commerce here. Those vast venerable walls were not made to keep out cows, but men-at-arms, led by fierce captains, who prowled about the gates, and robbed the traders as they passed in and out with their bales, their goods, their pack-horses and their wains. Is the place so dead that even the clergy of the different denominations can't quarrel? Why, seven or eight, or a dozen, or fifteen hundred years ago (they haven't the register at Saint Peter's up to that remote period—I daresay it was burnt in the fire of London)—a dozen hundred years ago, when there was some life in the town, Saint Lucius was stoned here on account of theological differences, after founding our church in Cornhill.

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There was a sweet pretty river walk we used to take in the evening and mark the mountains round glooming with a deeper purple; the shades creeping up the golden walls; the river brawling, the cattle calling, the maids and chatterboxes round the fountains babbling and bawling; and several times in the course of our sober walks we overtook a lazy slouching boy, or hobbledehoy, with a rusty coat, and trousers not too long, and big feet trailing lazily one after the other, and large lazy hands dawdling from out the tight sleeves, and in the lazy hands a little book, which my lad held up to his face, and which I daresay so charmed and ravished him, that he was blind to the beautiful sights around him; unmindful, I would venture to lay any wager, of the lessons he had to learn for to-morrow; forgetful of mother waiting supper, and father preparing a scolding;—absorbed utterly and entirely in his book.

What was it that so fascinated the young student, as he stood by the river shore? Not the *pons asinorum*. What book so delighted him, and blinded him to all the rest of the world, so that he did not care to see the apple-woman with her fruit, or (more tempting still to sons of Eve) the pretty girls with their apple cheeks, who laughed and prattled round the fountain? What was the book? Do you suppose it was Livy, or the Greek grammar? No; it was a NOVEL that you were reading, you lazy, not very clean, good-for-nothing, sensible boy! It was D'Artagnan locking up General Monk in a box, or almost succeeding in keeping Charles the First's head on. It was the prisoner of the Château d'If cutting himself out of the sack fifty feet under water (I mention the novels I like best myself—novels without love or talking, or any of that sort of nonsense, but containing plenty of fighting, escaping, robbery, and rescuing)—cutting himself out of the sack and swimming to the island of Monte Cristo. O Dumas! O thou brave kind gallant old Alexandre! I hereby offer thee homage, and give thee thanks for many pleasant hours. I have read thee (being sick in bed) for thirteen hours of a happy day, and had the ladies of the house fighting for the volumes. Be assured that lazy boy was reading Dumas (or I will go so far as to let the reader here pronounce the eulogium, or insert the name of his favourite author); and as for the anger, or, it may be, the verberations of his schoolmaster, or the remonstrances of his father, or the tender pleadings of his mother that he should not let the supper grow cold—I don't believe the scapegrace cared one fig. No! Figs are sweet, but fictions are sweeter.

Have you ever seen a score of white-bearded, white-robed warriors, or grave seniors of the city, seated at the gate of Jaffa or

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Beyrout, and listening to the story-teller reciting his marvels out of "Antar" or the "Arabian Nights"? I was once present when a young gentleman at table put a tart away from him, and said to his neighbour, the Younger Son (with rather a fatuous air), "I never eat sweets."

"Not eat sweets! and do you know why?" says T.

"Because I am past that kind of thing," says the young gentleman.

"Because you are a glutton and a sot!" cries the Elder (and Juvenis winces a little). "All people who have natural healthy appetites love sweets; all children, all women, all Eastern people, whose tastes are not corrupted by gluttony and strong drink." And a plateful of raspberries and cream disappeared before the philosopher.

You take the allegory? Novels are sweets. All people with healthy literary appetites love them—almost all women;—a vast number of clever hard-headed men. Why, one of the most learned physicians in England said to me only yesterday, "I have just read *So-and-so* for the second time" (naming one of Jones's exquisite fictions). Judges, bishops, chancellors, mathematicians are notorious novel-readers; as well as young boys and sweet girls, and their kind tender mothers. Who has not read about Eldon, and how he cried over novels every night when he was not at whist?

As for that lazy naughty boy at Chur, I doubt whether *he* will like novels when he is thirty years of age. He is taking too great a glut of them now. He is eating jelly until he will be sick. He will know most plots by the time he is twenty, so that *he* will never be surprised when the Stranger turns out to be the rightful earl,—when the old waterman, throwing off his beggarly gabardine, shows his stars and the collars of his various orders, and clasping Antonia to his bosom, proves himself to be the prince, her long-lost father. He will recognise the novelist's same characters, though they appear in red-heeled pumps and *ailes-de-pigeon*, or the garb of the nineteenth century. He will get weary of sweets, as boys of private schools grow (or used to grow, for I have done growing some little time myself, and the practice may have ended too)—as private schoolboys used to grow tired of the pudding before their mutton at dinner.

And pray what is the moral of this apologue? The moral I take to be this: the appetite for novels extending to the end of the world—far away in the frozen deep, the sailors reading them to one another during the endless night; far away under the Syrian stars, the solemn sheikhs and elders hearkening to the poet as he recites his tales; far away in the Indian camps, where the soldiers listen

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to ——'s tales, or ——'s, after the hot day's march; far away in little Chur yonder, where the lazy boy pores over the fond volume, and drinks it in with all his eyes;—the demand being what we know it is, the merchant must supply it as he will supply saddles and pale ale for Bombay or Calcutta.

But as surely as the cadet drinks too much pale ale, it will disagree with him; and so surely, dear youth, will too much of novels cloy on thee. I wonder, do novel-writers themselves read many novels? If you go into Gunter's, you don't see those charming young ladies (to whom I present my most respectful compliments) eating tarts and ices, but at the proper eventide they have good plain wholesome tea and bread-and-butter. Can anybody tell me does the author of the "Tale of Two Cities" read novels? does the author of the "Tower of London" devour romances? does the dashing "Harry Lorrequer" delight in "Plain or Ringlets" or "Sponge's Sporting Tour"? Does the veteran, from whose flowing pen we had the books which delighted our young days, "Darnley," and "Richelieu," and "Delorme,"* relish the works of Alexandre the Great, and thrill over the "Three Musqueteers"? Does the accomplished author of the "Caxtons" read the other tales in *Blackwood*? (For example, that ghost-story printed last August, and which, for my part, though I read it in the public reading-room at the "Pavilion" Hotel at Folkestone, I protest frightened me so that I scarce dared look out over my shoulder.) Does "Uncle Tom" admire "Adam Bede"? and does the author of the "Vicar of Wrexhill" laugh over the "Warden" and the "Three Clerks"? Dear youth of ingenuous countenance and ingenuous pudor! I make no doubt that the eminent parties above named all partake of novels in moderation—eat jellies—but mainly nourish themselves upon wholesome roast and boiled.

Here, dear youth aforesaid! our *Cornhill Magazine* owners strive to provide thee with facts as well as fiction; and though it does not become them to brag of their Ordinary, at least they invite thee to a table where thou shalt sit in good company. That story of the "Fox"† was written by one of the gallant seamen who sought for poor Franklin under the awful Arctic Night: that account of China‡ is told by the man of all the empire most likely

* By the way, what a strange fate is that which befell the veteran novelist! He was appointed her Majesty's Consul-General in Venice, the only city in Europe where the famous "two cavaliers" cannot by any possibility be seen riding together.

† "The Search for Sir John Franklin. (From the Private Journal of an Officer of the 'Fox.')"

‡ "The Chinese and the Outer Barbarians." By Sir John Bowring.

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to know of what he speaks: those pages regarding Volunteers* come from an honoured hand that has borne the sword in a hundred famous fields, and pointed the British guns in the greatest siege in the world.

Shall we point out others? We are fellow-travellers, and shall make acquaintance as the voyage proceeds. In the Atlantic steamers, on the first day out (and on high- and holy-days subsequently), the jellies set down on table are richly ornamented; *medioque in fonte leporum* rise the American and British flags nobly emblazoned in tin. As the passengers remark this pleasing phenomenon, the Captain no doubt improves the occasion by expressing a hope, to his right and left, that the flag of Mr. Bull and his younger Brother may always float side by side in friendly emulation. Novels having been previously compared to jellies—here are two (one perhaps not entirely saccharine, and flavoured with an *amari aliquid* very distasteful to some palates) — two novels† under two flags, the one that ancient ensign which has hung before the well-known booth of "Vanity Fair"; the other that fresh and handsome standard which has lately been hoisted on "Barchester Towers." Pray, sir, or madam, to which dish will you be helped?

So have I seen my friends Captain Lang and Captain Comstock press their guests to partake of the fare on that memorable "First day out," when there is no man, I think, who sits down but asks a blessing on his voyage, and the good ship dips over the bar, and bounds away into the blue water.

* "Our Volunteers." By Sir John Burgoyne.

† "Lovel the Widower" and "Framley Parsonage."

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NIL NISI BONUM

ALMOST the last words which Sir Walter spoke to Lockhart, his biographer, were, "Be a good man, my dear!" and with the last flicker of breath on his dying lips, he sighed a farewell to his family, and passed away blessing them.

Two men, famous, admired, beloved, have just left us, the Goldsmith and the Gibbon of our time.* Ere a few weeks are over, many a critic's pen will be at work, reviewing their lives and passing judgment on their works. This is no review, or history, or criticism: only a word in testimony of respect and regard from a man of letters, who owes to his own professional labour the honour of becoming acquainted with these two eminent literary men. One was the first Ambassador whom the New World of Letters sent to the Old. He was born almost with the republic; the *pater patriæ* had laid his hand on the child's head. He bore Washington's name; he came amongst us bringing the kindest sympathy, the most artless smiling goodwill. His new country (which some people here might be disposed to regard rather superciliously) could send us, as he showed in his own person, a gentleman, who, though himself born in no very high sphere, was most finished, polished, easy, witty, quiet; and, socially, the equal of the most refined Europeans. If Irving's welcome in England was a kind one, was it not also gratefully remembered? If he ate our salt, did he not pay us with a thankful heart? Who can calculate the amount of friendliness and good feeling for our country which this writer's generous and untiring regard for us disseminated in his own? His books are read by millions † of his countrymen, whom he has taught to love England, and why to love her. It would have been easy to speak otherwise than he did: to inflame national rancours, which, at the time when he first became known as a public writer, war had just renewed: to cry down the old civilisation at the expense of the

* Washington Irving, died November 28, 1859; Lord Macaulay, died December 28, 1859.

† See his *Life* in the most remarkable *Dictionary of Authors*, published lately at Philadelphia by Mr. Alibone.

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new: to point out our faults, arrogance, shortcomings, and give the republic to infer how much she was the parent state's superior. There are writers enough in the United States, honest and otherwise, who preach that kind of doctrine. But the good Irving, the peaceful, the friendly, had no place for bitterness in his heart, and no scheme but kindness. Received in England with extraordinary tenderness and friendship (Scott, Southey, Byron, a hundred others have borne witness to their liking for him), he was a messenger of goodwill and peace between his country and ours. "See, friends!" he seems to say, "these English are not so wicked, rapacious, callous, proud, as you have been taught to believe them. I went amongst them a humble man; won my way by my pen; and, when known, found every hand held out to me with kindliness and welcome. Scott is a great man, you acknowledge. Did not Scott's King of England give a gold medal to him, and another to me, your countryman, and a stranger?"

Tradition in the United States still fondly retains the history of the feasts and rejoicings which awaited Irving on his return to his native country from Europe. He had a national welcome; he stammered in his speeches, hid himself in confusion, and the people loved him all the better. He had worthily represented America in Europe. In that young community a man who brings home with him abundant European testimonials is still treated with respect (I have found American writers, of wide-world reputation, strangely solicitous about the opinions of quite obscure British critics, and elated or depressed by their judgments); and Irving went home medalled by the King, diplomatised by the University, crowned and honoured and admired. He had not in any way intrigued for his honours, he had fairly won them; and, in Irving's instance, as in others, the old country was glad and eager to pay them.

In America the love and regard for Irving was a national sentiment. Party wars are perpetually raging there, and are carried on by the press with a rancour and fierceness against individuals which exceed British, almost Irish, virulence. It seemed to me, during a year's travel in the country, as if no one ever aimed a blow at Irving. All men held their hands from that harmless friendly peacemaker. I had the good fortune to see him at New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington,* and remarked how in every place he was honoured and welcome. Every large city has its "Irving House." The country takes pride in the fame of its

* At Washington, Mr. Irving came to a lecture given by the writer, which Mr. Filmore and General Pierce, the President and President Elect, were also kind enough to attend together. "Two Kings of Brentford smelling at one rose," says Irving, looking up with his good-humoured smile.

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AN "INTERVIEWER"

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men of letters. The gate of his own charming little domain on the beautiful Hudson River was for ever swinging before visitors who came to him. He shut out no one.* I had seen many pictures of his house, and read descriptions of it, in both of which it was treated with a not unusual American exaggeration. It was but a pretty little cabin of a place; the gentleman of the press who took notes of the place, whilst his kind old host was sleeping, might have visited the whole house in a couple of minutes.

And how came it that this house was so small, when Mr. Irving's books were sold by hundreds of thousands, nay, millions, when his profits were known to be large, and the habits of life of the good old bachelor were notoriously modest and simple? He had loved once in his life. The lady he loved died; and he, whom all the world loved, never sought to replace her. I can't say how much the thought of that fidelity has touched me. Does not the very cheerfulness of his after life add to the pathos of that untold story? To grieve always was not in his nature: or, when he had his sorrow, to bring all the world in to condole with him and bemoan it. Deep and quiet he lays the love of his heart, and buries it; and grass and flowers grow over the scarred ground in due time.

Irving had such a small house and such narrow rooms, because there was a great number of people to occupy them. He could only afford to keep one old horse (which, lazy and aged as it was, managed once or twice to run away with that careless old horseman). He could only afford to give plain sherry to that amiable British paragraph-monger from New York, who saw the patriarch asleep over his modest blameless cup, and fetched the public into his private chamber to look at him. Irving could only live very modestly, because the wifeless, childless man had a number of children to whom he was as a father. He had as many as nine nieces, I am told—I saw two of these ladies at his house—with all of whom the dear old man had shared the produce of his labour and genius.

"*Be a good man, my dear.*" One can't but think of these last words of the veteran Chief of Letters, who had tasted and tested the value of worldly success, admiration, prosperity. Was

* Mr. Irving described to me, with that humour and good-humour which he always kept, how, amongst other visitors, a member of the British press who had carried his distinguished pen to America (where he employed it in vilifying his own country) came to Sunnyside, introduced himself to Irving, partook of his wine and luncheon, and in two days described Mr. Irving, his house, his nieces, his meal, and his manner of dozing afterwards, in a New York paper. On another occasion, Irving said, laughing, "Two persons came to me, and one held me in conversation whilst the other miscreant took my portrait!"

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Irving not good, and of his works, was not his life the best part? In his family, gentle, generous, good-humoured, affectionate, self-denying: in society, a delightful example of complete gentlemanhood; quite unspoiled by prosperity; never obsequious to the great (or, worse still, to the base and mean, as some public men are forced to be in his and other countries); eager to acknowledge every contemporary's merit; always kind and affable to the young members of his calling; in his professional bargains and mercantile dealings delicately honest and grateful; one of the most charming masters of our lighter language; the constant friend to us and our nation; to men of letters doubly dear, not for his wit and genius merely, but as an exemplar of goodness, probity, and pure life:—I don't know what sort of testimonial will be raised to him in his own country, where generous and enthusiastic acknowledgment of American merit is never wanting; but Irving was in our service as well as theirs; and as they have placed a stone at Greenwich yonder in memory of that gallant young Bellot, who shared the perils and fate of some of our Arctic seamen, I would like to hear of some memorial raised by English writers and friends of letters in affectionate remembrance of the dear and good Washington Irving.

As for the other writer, whose departure many friends, some few most dearly-loved relatives, and multitudes of admiring readers deplore, our republic has already decreed his statue, and he must have known that he had earned this posthumous honour. He is not a poet and man of letters merely, but citizen, statesman, a great British worthy. Almost from the first moment when he appears, amongst boys, amongst college students, amongst men, he is marked, and takes rank as a great Englishman. All sorts of successes are easy to him: as a lad he goes down into the arena with others, and wins all the prizes to which he has a mind. A place in the senate is straightway offered to the young man. He takes his seat there; he speaks, when so minded, without party anger or intrigue, but not without party faith and a sort of heroic enthusiasm for his cause. Still he is poet and philosopher even more than orator. That he may have leisure and means to pursue his darling studies, he absents himself for a while, and accepts a richly-remunerative post in the East. As learned a man may live in a cottage or a college common-room; but it always seemed to me that ample means and recognised rank were Macaulay's as of right. Years ago there was a wretched outcry raised because Mr. Macaulay dated a letter from Windsor Castle, where he was staying. Immortal gods! Was this man not a fit guest for any palace in the world? or a fit companion for any man or woman in it? I daresay, after Austerlitz, the old K. K. Court officials and footmen sneered at Napoleon

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for dating from Schönbrunn. But that miserable "Windsor Castle" outcry is an echo out of fast-retreating old-world remembrances. The place of such a natural chief was amongst the first in the land; and that country is best, according to our British notion at least, where the man of eminence has the best chance of investing his genius and intellect.

If a company of giants were got together, very likely one or two of the mere six-feet-six people might be angry at the incontestable superiority of the very tallest of the party: and so I have heard some London wits, rather peevish at Macaulay's superiority, complain that he occupied too much of the talk, and so forth. Now that wonderful tongue is to speak no more, will not many a man grieve that he no longer has the chance to listen? To remember the talk is to wonder: to think not only of the treasures he had in his memory, but of the trifles he had stored there, and could produce with equal readiness. Almost on the last day I had the fortune to see him, a conversation happened suddenly to spring up about senior wranglers, and what they had done in after life. To the almost terror of the persons present, Macaulay began with the senior wrangler of 1801–2–3–4, and so on, giving the name of each, and relating his subsequent career and rise. Every man who has known him has his story regarding that astonishing memory. It may be that he was not ill-pleased that you should recognise it; but to those prodigious intellectual feats, which were so easy to him, who would grudge his tribute of homage? His talk was, in a word, admirable, and we admired it.

Of the notices which have appeared regarding Lord Macaulay, up to the day when the present lines are written (the 9th of January), the reader should not deny himself the pleasure of looking especially at two. It is a good sign of the times when such articles as these (I mean the articles in the *Times* and *Saturday Review*) appear in our public prints about our public men. They educate us, as it were, to admire rightly. An uninstructed person in a museum or at a concert may pass by without recognising a picture or a passage of music, which the connoisseur by his side may show him is a masterpiece of harmony, or a wonder of artistic skill. After reading these papers you like and respect more the person you have admired so much already. And so with regard to Macaulay's style there may be faults of course—what critic can't point them out? But for the nonce we are not talking about faults: we want to say *nil nisi bonum*. Well—take at hazard any three pages of the "Essays" or "History:"—and, glimmering below the stream of the narrative, as it were, you, an average reader, see one, two, three, a half-score of allusions to other historic facts, characters,

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literature, poetry, with which you are acquainted. Why is this epithet used? Whence is that simile drawn? How does he manage, in two or three words, to paint an individual, or to indicate a landscape? Your neighbour, who has *his* reading, and his little stock of literature stowed away in his mind, shall detect more points, allusions, happy touches, indicating not only the prodigious memory and vast learning of this master, but the wonderful industry, the honest, humble, previous toil of this great scholar. He reads twenty books to write a sentence; he travels a hundred miles to make a line of description.

Many Londoners—not all—have seen the British Museum Library. I speak *à cœur ouvert*, and pray the kindly reader to bear with me. I have seen all sorts of domes of Peters and Pauls, Sophia, Pantheon,—what not?—and have been struck by none of them so much as by that catholic dome in Bloomsbury, under which our million volumes are housed. What peace, what love, what truth, what beauty, what happiness for all, what generous kindness for you and me, are here spread out! It seems to me one cannot sit down in that place without a heart full of grateful reverence. I own to have said my grace at the table, and to have thanked Heaven for this my English birthright, freely to partake of these bountiful books, and to speak the truth I find there. Under the dome which held Macaulay's brain, and from which his solemn eyes looked out on the world but a fortnight since, what a vast, brilliant, and wonderful store of learning was ranged! what strange lore would he not fetch for you at your bidding! A volume of law, or history, a book of poetry familiar or forgotten (except by himself who forgot nothing), a novel ever so old, and he had it at hand. I spoke to him once about "Clarissa." "Not read 'Clarissa'!" he cried out. "If you have once thoroughly entered on 'Clarissa' and are infected by it, you can't leave it. When I was in India I passed one hot season at the hills, and there were the Governor-General, and the Secretary of Government, and the Commander-in-Chief, and their wives. I had 'Clarissa' with me: and, as soon as they began to read, the whole station was in a passion of excitement about Miss Harlowe and her misfortunes, and her scoundrelly Lovelace! The Governor's wife seized the book, and the Secretary waited for it, and the Chief Justice could not read it for tears!" He acted the whole scene: he paced up and down the "Athenæum" library: I daresay he could have spoken pages of the book,—of that book, and of what countless piles of others!

In this little paper let us keep to the text of *nil nisi bonum*. One paper I have read regarding Lord Macaulay says "he had no heart." Why, a man's books may not always speak the truth, but

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they speak his mind in spite of himself: and it seems to me this man's heart is beating through every page he penned. He is always in a storm of revolt and indignation against wrong, craft, tyranny. How he cheers heroic resistance; how he backs and applauds freedom struggling for its own; how he hates scoundrels, ever so victorious and successful; how he recognises genius, though selfish villains possess it! The critic who says Macaulay had no heart, might say that Johnson had none: and two men more generous, and more loving, and more hating, and more partial, and more noble, do not live in our history. Those who knew Lord Macaulay knew how admirably tender and generous,* and affectionate he was. It was not his business to bring his family before the theatre footlights, and call for bouquets from the gallery as he wept over them.

If any young man of letters reads this little sermon—and to him, indeed, it is addressed—I would say to him, "Bear Scott's words in your mind, and '*be good, my dear.*'" Here are two literary men gone to their account, and, *laus Deo*, as far as we know, it is fair, and open, and clean. Here is no need of apologies for shortcomings, or explanations of vices which would have been virtues but for unavoidable &c. Here are two examples of men most differently gifted: each pursuing his calling; each speaking his truth as God bade him; each honest in his life; just and irreproachable in his dealings; dear to his friends; honoured by his country; beloved at his fireside. It has been the fortunate lot of both to give incalculable happiness and delight to the world, which thanks them in return with an immense kindliness, respect, affection. It may not be our chance, brother scribe, to be endowed with such merit, or rewarded with such fame. But the rewards of these men are rewards paid to *our service*. We may not win the bâton or epaulettes; but God give us strength to guard the honour of the flag!

* Since the above was written, I have been informed that it has been found, on examining Lord Macaulay's papers, that he was in the habit of giving away *more than a fourth part* of his annual income.

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ON TWO CHILDREN IN BLACK

MONTAIGNE and "Howel's Letters" are my bedside books. If I wake at night, I have one or other of them to prattle me to sleep again. They talk about themselves for ever, and don't weary me. I like to hear them tell their old stories over and over again. I read them in the dozy hours, and only half remember them. I am informed that both of them tell coarse stories. I don't heed them. It was the custom of their time, as it is of Highlanders and Hottentots, to dispense with a part of dress which we all wear in cities. But people can't afford to be shocked either at Cape Town or at Inverness every time they meet an individual who wears his national airy raiment. I never knew the "Arabian Nights" was an improper book until I happened once to read it in a "family edition." Well, *qui s'excuse*. . . . Who, pray, has accused me as yet? Here am I smothering dear good old Mrs. Grundy's objections, before she has opened her mouth. I love, I say, and scarce ever tire of hearing, the artless prattle of those two dear old friends, the Perigourdin gentleman and the priggish little Clerk of King Charles's Council. Their egotism in nowise disgusts me. I hope I shall always like to hear men, in reason, talk about themselves. What subject does a man know better? If I stamp on a friend's corn, his outcry is genuine—he confounds my clumsiness in the accents of truth. He is speaking about himself, and expressing his emotion of grief or pain in a manner perfectly authentic and veracious. I have a story of my own, of a wrong done to me by somebody, as far back as the year 1838: whenever I think of it, and have had a couple of glasses of wine, I *cannot* help telling it. The toe is stamped upon: the pain is just as keen as ever: I cry out, and perhaps utter imprecatory language. I told the story only last Wednesday at dinner:—

"Mr. Roundabout," says a lady sitting by me, "how comes it that in your books there is a certain class (it may be of men, or it may be of women, but that is not the question in point)—how comes it, dear sir, there is a certain class of persons whom you

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always attack in your writings, and savagely rush at, goad, poke, toss up in the air, kick, and trample on?"

I couldn't help myself. I knew I ought not to do it. I told her the whole story, between the *entrées* and the roast. The wound began to bleed again. The horrid pang was there, as keen and as fresh as ever. If I live half as long as Tithonus,* that crack across my heart can never be cured. There are wrongs and griefs that *can't* be mended. It is all very well of you, my dear Mrs. G., to say that this spirit is unchristian, and that we ought to forgive and forget, and so forth. How can I forget at will? How forgive? I can forgive the occasional waiter who broke my beautiful old decanter at that very dinner. I am not going to do him any injury. But all the powers on earth can't make that claret-jug whole.

So, you see, I told the lady the inevitable story. I was egotistical. I was selfish, no doubt; but I was natural, and was telling the truth. You say you are angry with a man for talking about himself. It is because you yourself are selfish, that that other person's Self does not interest you. Be interested by other people and with their affairs. Let them prattle and talk to you, as I do my dear old egotists just mentioned. When you have had enough of them, and sudden hazes come over your eyes, lay down the volume; pop out the candle, and *dormez bien*. I should like to write a nightcap book—a book that you can muse over, that you can smile over, that you can yawn over—a book of which you can say, "Well, this man is so and so and so and so; but he has a friendly heart (although some wiseacres have painted him as black as Bogey), and you may trust what he says." I should like to touch you sometimes with a reminiscence that shall waken your sympathy, and make you say, *Io anchè* have so thought, felt, smiled, suffered. Now, how is this to be done except by egotism? *Linea recta brevissima*. That right line "I" is the very shortest, simplest, straightforwardest means of communication between us, and stands for what it is worth and no more. Sometimes authors say, "the present writer has often remarked;" or, "The undersigned has observed;" or "Mr. Roundabout presents his compliments to the gentle reader, and begs to state," &c.: but "I" is better and straighter than all these grimaces of modesty: and although these are Roundabout Papers, and may wander who knows whither, I shall ask leave to maintain the upright and simple perpendicular. When this bundle of egotisms is bound up together, as they may be one day, if no accident prevents this tongue from

* "Tithonus," by Tennyson, had appeared in the preceding (the 2nd) number of the *Cornhill Magazine*.

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wagging, or this ink from running, they will bore you very likely; so it would to read through "Howel's Letters" from beginning to end, or to eat up the whole of a ham: but a slice on occasion may have a relish: a dip into the volume at random and so on for a page or two: and now and then a smile; and presently a gape; and the book drops out of your hand; and so, *bon soir*, and pleasant dreams to you. I have frequently seen men at clubs asleep over their humble servant's works, and am always pleased. Even at a lecture I don't mind, if they don't snore. Only the other day when my friend A. said, "You've left off that Roundabout business, I see; very glad you have," I joined in the general roar of laughter at the table. I don't care a fig whether Archilochus likes the papers or no. You don't like partridge, Archilochus, or porridge, or what not? Try some other dish. I am not going to force mine down your throat, or quarrel with you if you refuse it. Once in America a clever and candid woman said to me, at the close of a dinner, during which I had been sitting beside her, "Mr. Roundabout, I was told I should not like you; and I don't." "Well, ma'am," says I, in a tone of the most unfeigned simplicity, "I don't care." And we became good friends immediately, and esteemed each other ever after.

So, my dear Archilochus, if you come upon this paper, and say, "Fudge!" and pass on to another, I for one shall not be in the least mortified. If you say, "What does he mean by calling this paper 'On Two Children in Black' when there's nothing about people in black at all, unless the ladies he met (and evidently bored) at dinner were black women? What is all this egotistical pother! A plague on his I's!" My dear fellow, if you read "Montaigne's Essays," you must own that he might call almost any one by the name of any other, and that an essay on the Moon or an essay on Green Cheese would be as appropriate a title as one of his on Coaches, on the Art of Discoursing, or Experience, or what you will. Besides, if I *have* a subject (and I have), I claim to approach it in a roundabout manner.

You remember Balzac's tale of the "Peau de Chagrin," and how every time the possessor used it for the accomplishment of some wish the fairy *peau* shrank a little and the owner's life correspondingly shortened? I have such a desire to be well with my public that I am actually giving up my favourite story. I am killing my goose, I know I am. I can't tell my story of the children in black after this; after printing it, and sending it through the country. When they are gone to the printer's these little things become public property. I take their hands. I bless them. I say, "Good-bye, my little dears." I am quite sorry to part with them:

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but the fact is, I have told all my friends about them already, and don't dare to take them about with me any more.

Now every word is true of this little anecdote, and I submit that there lies in it a most curious and exciting little mystery. I am like a man who gives you the last bottle of his '25 claret. It is the pride of his cellar; he knows it, and he has a right to praise it. He takes up the bottle, fashioned so slenderly—takes it up tenderly, cants it with care, places it before his friends, declares how good it is, with honest pride, and wishes he had a hundred dozen bottles more of the same wine in his cellar. *Si quid novisti*, &c. I shall be very glad to hear from you. I protest and vow I am giving you the best I have.

Well, who those little boys in black were, I shall never probably know, to my dying day. They were very pretty little men, with pale faces, and large melancholy eyes; and they had beautiful little hands, and little boots, and the finest little shirts, and black pale-tots lined with the richest silk; and they had picture-books in several languages, English, and French, and German, I remember. Two more aristocratic-looking little men I never set eyes on. They were travelling with a very handsome pale lady in mourning, and a maid-servant dressed in black, too; and on the lady's face there was the deepest grief. The little boys clambered and played about the carriage, and she sat watching. It was a railway-carriage from Frankfort to Heidelberg.

I saw at once that she was the mother of those children, and going to part from them. Perhaps I have tried parting with my own, and not found the business very pleasant. Perhaps I recollect driving down (with a certain trunk and carpet-bag on the box) with my own mother to the end of the avenue, where we waited—only a few minutes—until the whirring wheels of that "Defiance" coach were heard rolling towards us as certain as death. Twang goes the horn; up goes the trunk; down come the steps. Bah! I see the autumn evening: I hear the wheels now: I smart the cruel smart again: and, boy or man, have never been able to bear the sight of people parting from their children.

I thought these little men might be going to school for the first time in their lives; and mamma might be taking them to the Doctor, and would leave them with many fond charges, and little wistful secrets of love, bidding the elder to protect his younger brother, and the younger to be gentle, and to remember to pray to God always for his mother, who would pray for her boy too. Our party made friends with these young ones during the little journey; but the poor lady was too sad to talk except to the boys now and again, and sat in her corner, pale, and silently looking at them.

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The next day, we saw the lady and her maid driving in the direction of the railway-station, *without the boys*. The parting had taken place, then. That night they would sleep among strangers. The little beds at home were vacant, and poor mother might go and look at them. Well, tears flow, and friends part, and mothers pray every night all over the world. I daresay we went to see Heidelberg Castle, and admired the vast shattered walls, and quaint gables; and the Neckar running its bright course through that charming scene of peace and beauty; and ate our dinner, and drank our wine with relish. The poor mother would eat but little *Abendessen* that night; and, as for the children—that first night at school—hard bed, hard words, strange boys bullying, and laughing, and jarring you with their hateful merriment—as for the first night at a strange school, we most of us remember what *that* is. And the first is not the *worst*, my boys, there's the rub. But each man has his share of troubles, and, I suppose, you must have yours.

From Heidelberg we went to Baden-Baden: and, I daresay, saw Madame de Schlangenbad and Madame de la Cruchecassée, and Count Punter, and honest Captain Blackball. And whom should we see in the evening but our two little boys, walking on each side of a fierce, yellow-faced, bearded man! We wanted to renew our acquaintance with them, and they were coming forward quite pleased to greet us. But the father pulled back one of the little men by his paletot, gave a grim scowl, and walked away. I can see the children now looking rather frightened away from us and up into the father's face, or the cruel uncle's—which was he? I think he was the father. So this was the end of them. Not school, as I at first had imagined. The mother was gone, who had given them the heaps of pretty books, and the pretty studs in the shirts, and the pretty silken clothes, and the tender—tender cares; and they were handed to this scowling practitioner of Trente-et-Quarante. Ah! this is worse than school. Poor little men! poor mother sitting by the vacant little beds! We saw the children once or twice after, always in Scowler's company; but we did not dare to give each other any marks of recognition.

From Baden we went to Basle, and thence to Lucerne, and so over the Saint Gothard into Italy. From Milan we went to Venice; and now comes the singular part of my story. In Venice there is a little court of which I forget the name: but in it is an apothecary's shop, whither I went to buy some remedy for the bites of certain animals which abound in Venice. Crawling animals, skipping animals, and humming flying animals; all three will have at you at once; and one night nearly drove me into a strait-waistcoat.

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FATHER, OR UNCLE?

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Well, as I was coming out of the apothecary's with the bottle of spirits of hartshorn in my hand (it really does do the bites a great deal of good), whom should I light upon but one of my little Heidelberg-Baden boys!

I have said how handsomely they were dressed as long as they were with their mother. When I saw the boy at Venice, who perfectly recognised me, his only garb was a wretched yellow cotton gown. His little feet, on which I had admired the little shiny boots, were *without shoe or stocking*. He looked at me, ran to an old hag of a woman, who seized his hand; and with her he disappeared down one of the thronged lanes of the city.

From Venice we went to Trieste (the Vienna railway at that time was only opened as far as Laybach, and the magnificent Semmering Pass was not quite completed). At a station between Laybach and Graetz, one of my companions alighted for refreshment, and came back to the carriage saying:—

"There's that horrible man from Baden with the two little boys."

Of course, we had talked about the appearance of the little boy at Venice, and his strangely altered garb. My companion said they were pale, wretched-looking, and *dressed quite shabbily*.

I got out at several stations, and looked at all the carriages. I could not see my little men. From that day to this I have never set eyes on them. That is all my story. Who were they? What could they be? How can you explain that mystery of the mother giving them up; of the remarkable splendour and elegance of their appearance while under her care; of their barefooted squalor in Venice, a month afterwards; of their shabby habiliments at Laybach? Had the father gambled away his money, and sold their clothes? How came they to have passed out of the hands of a refined lady (as she evidently was, with whom I first saw them) into the charge of quite a common woman like her with whom I saw one of the boys at Venice? Here is but one chapter of the story. Can any man write the next, or that preceding the strange one on which I happened to light? Who knows? the mystery may have some quite simple solution. I saw two children, attired like little princes, taken from their mother and consigned to other care; and a fortnight afterwards, one of them barefooted and like a beggar. Who will read this riddle of The Two Children in Black?

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THE LAST SKETCH

NOT many days since I went to visit a house where in former years I had received many a friendly welcome. We went into the owner's—an artist's—studio. Prints, pictures, and sketches hung on the walls as I had last seen and remembered them. The implements of the painter's art were there. The light which had shone upon so many many hours of patient and cheerful toil poured through the northern window upon print and bust, lay figure and sketch, and upon the easel before which the good, the gentle, the beloved Leslie laboured. In this room the busy brain had devised, and the skilful hand executed, I know not how many of the noble works which have delighted the world with their beauty and charming humour. Here the poet called up into pictorial presence, and informed with life, grace, beauty, infinite friendly mirth and wondrous naturalness of expression, the people of whom his dear books told him the stories,—his Shakspeare, his Cervantes, his Molière, his Le Sage. There was his last work on the easel—a beautiful fresh smiling shape of Titania, such as his sweet guileless fancy imagined the *Midsummer Night's* queen to be. Gracious, and pure, and bright, the sweet smiling image glimmers on the canvas. Fairy elves, no doubt, were to have been grouped around their mistress in laughing clusters. Honest Bottom's grotesque head and form are indicated as reposing by the side of the consummate beauty. The darkling forest would have grown around them, with the stars glittering from the midsummer sky: the flowers at the queen's feet, and the boughs and foliage about her, would have been peopled with gambolling sprites and fays. They were dwelling in the artist's mind no doubt, and would have been developed by that patient, faithful, admirable genius: but the busy brain stopped working, the skilful hand fell lifeless, the loving honest heart ceased to beat. What was she to have been—that fair Titania—when perfected by the patient skill of the poet, who in imagination saw the sweet innocent figure, and with tender courtesy and caresses, as it were, posed and shaped and traced the fair form? Is there record kept anywhere of fancies conceived, beautiful, unborn? Some day

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will they assume form in some yet undeveloped light? If our bad unspoken thoughts are registered against us, and are written in the awful account, will not the good thoughts unspoken, the love and tenderness, the pity, beauty, charity, which pass through the breast, and cause the heart to throb with silent good, find a remembrance too? A few weeks more, and this lovely offspring of the poet's conception would have been complete—to charm the world with its beautiful mirth. May there not be some sphere unknown to us where it may have an existence? They say our words, once out of our lips, go travelling *in omne ævum*, reverberating for ever and ever. If our words, why not our thoughts? If the Has Been, why not the Might Have Been?

Some day our spirits may be permitted to walk in galleries of fancies more wondrous and beautiful than any achieved works which at present we see, and our minds to behold and delight in masterpieces which poets' and artists' minds have fathered and conceived only.

With a feeling much akin to that with which I looked upon the friend's—the admirable artist's—unfinished work I can fancy many readers turning to the last pages which were traced by Charlotte Brontë's hand. Of the multitude that have read her books, who has not known and deplored the tragedy of her family, her own most sad and untimely fate? Which of her readers has not become her friend? Who that has known her books has not admired the artist's noble English, the burning love of truth, the bravery, the simplicity, the indignation at wrong, the eager sympathy, the pious love and reverence, the passionate honour, so to speak, of the woman? What a story is that of that family of poets in their solitude yonder on the gloomy northern moors! At nine o'clock at night, Mrs. Gaskell tells, after evening prayers, when their guardian and relative had gone to bed, the three poetesses—the three maidens, Charlotte, and Emily, and Anne—Charlotte being the "motherly friend and guardian to the other two"—"began, like restless wild animals, to pace up and down their parlour, 'making out' their wonderful stories, talking over plans and projects, and thoughts of what was to be their future life."

One evening, at the close of 1854, as Charlotte Nicholls sat with her husband by the fire, listening to the howling of the wind about the house, she suddenly said to her husband, "If you had not been with me, I must have been writing now." She then ran upstairs, and brought down, and read aloud, the beginning of a new tale. When she had finished, her husband remarked, "The critics will accuse you of repetition." She replied, "Oh, I shall alter that. I always begin two or three times before I can please myself." But

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it was not to be. The trembling little hand was to write no more. The heart newly awakened to love and happiness, and throbbing with maternal hope, was soon to cease to beat; that intrepid outspeaker and champion of truth, that eager impetuous redresser of wrong, was to be called out of the world's fight and struggle, to lay down the shining arms, and to be removed to a sphere where even a noble indignation *cor ulterius nequit lacerare*, and where truth complete, and right triumphant, no longer need to wage war.

I can only say of this lady, *vidi tantum*. I saw her first just as I rose out of an illness from which I had never thought to recover. I remember the trembling little frame, the little hand, the great honest eyes. An impetuous honesty seemed to me to characterise the woman. Twice I recollect she took me to task for what she held to be errors in doctrine. Once about Fielding we had a disputation. She spoke her mind out. She jumped too rapidly to conclusions. (I have smiled at one or two passages in the "Biography," in which my own disposition or behaviour forms the subject of talk.) She formed conclusions that might be wrong and built up whole theories of character upon them. New to the London world, she entered it with an independent indomitable spirit of her own; and judged of contemporaries, and especially spied out arrogance or affectation, with extraordinary keenness of vision. She was angry with her favourites if their conduct or conversation fell below her ideal. Often she seemed to me to be judging the London folk prematurely: but perhaps the city is rather angry at being judged. I fancied an austere little Joan of Arc marching in upon us, and rebuking our easy lives, our easy morals. She gave me the impression of being a very pure, and lofty, and high-minded person. A great and holy reverence of right and truth seemed to be with her always. Such, in our brief interview, she appeared to me. As one thinks of that life so noble, so lonely—of that passion for truth—of those nights and nights of eager study, swarming fancies, invention, depression, elation, prayer; as one reads the necessarily incomplete, though most touching and admirable history of the heart that throbbed in this one little frame—of this one amongst the myriads of souls that have lived and died on this great earth—this great earth?—this little speck in the infinite universe of God,—with what wonder do we think of to-day, with what awe await to-morrow, when that which is now but darkly seen shall be clear! As I read this little fragmentary sketch, I think of the rest. Is it? And where is it? Will not the leaf be turned some day, and the story be told? Shall the deviser of the tale somewhere perfect the history of little EMMA's griefs and troubles? Shall TITANIA come forth complete with her

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sportive court, with the flowers at her feet, the forest around her, and all the stars of summer glittering overhead?

How well I remember the delight, and wonder, and pleasure with which I read "Jane Eyre," sent to me by an author whose name and sex were then alike unknown to me; the strange fascinations of the book; and how with my own work pressing upon me, I could not, having taken the volumes up, lay them down until they were read through! Hundreds of those who, like myself, recognised and admired that master-work of a great genius, will look with a mournful interest and regard and curiosity upon the last fragmentary sketch from the noble hand which wrote "Jane Eyre."

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ON RIBBONS

THE uncle of the present Sir Louis N. Bonaparte, K.G., &c., inaugurated his reign as Emperor over the neighbouring nation by establishing an Order, to which all citizens of his country, military, naval, and civil—all men most distinguished in science, letters, arts, and commerce—were admitted. The emblem of the Order was but a piece of ribbon, more or less long or broad, with a toy at the end of it. The Bourbons had toys and ribbons of their own, blue, black, and all-coloured; and on their return to dominion such good old Tories would naturally have preferred to restore their good old Orders of Saint Louis, Saint Esprit, and Saint Michel; but France had taken the ribbon of the Legion of Honour so to her heart that no Bourbon sovereign dared to pluck it thence.

In England, until very late days, we have been accustomed rather to pooh-pooh national Orders, to vote ribbons and crosses tinsel gewgaws, foolish foreign ornaments, and so forth. It is known how the Great Duke (the breast of whose own coat was plastered with some half-hundred decorations) was averse to the wearing of ribbons, medals, clasps, and the like by his army. We have all of us read how uncommonly distinguished Lord Castlereagh looked at Vienna, where he was the only gentleman present without any decoration whatever. And the Great Duke's theory was that clasps and ribbons, stars and garters, were good and proper ornaments for himself, for the chief officers of his distinguished army, and for gentlemen of high birth, who might naturally claim to wear a band of garter blue across their waistcoats; but that for common people your plain coat, without stars and ribbons, was the most sensible wear.

And no doubt you and I are as happy, as free, as comfortable; we can walk and dine as well; we can keep the winter's cold out as well without a star on our coats, as without a feather in our hats. How often we have laughed at the absurd mania of the Americans for dubbing their senators, members of Congress, and States' representatives, Honourable! We have a right to call *our*

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Privy Councillors Right Honourable, our Lords' sons Honourable, and so forth: but for a nation as numerous, well-educated, strong, rich, civilised, free as our own, to dare to give its distinguished citizens titles of honour—monstrous assumption of low-bred arrogance and *parvenu* vanity! Our titles are respectable, but theirs absurd. Mr. Jones, of London, a Chancellor's son, and a tailor's grandson, is justly Honourable, and entitled to be Lord Jones at his noble father's decease: but Mr. Brown, the senator from New York, is a silly upstart for tacking Honourable to his name, and our sturdy British good sense laughs at him. Who has not laughed (I have myself) at Honourable Nahum Dodge, Honourable Zeno Scudder, Honourable Hiram Boake, and the rest? A score of such queer names and titles I have smiled at in America. And, *mutato nomine?* I meet a born idiot, who is a peer and born legislator. This drivelling noodle and his descendants through life are your natural superiors and mine—your and my children's superiors. I read of an alderman kneeling and knighted at Court: I see a Gold-stick waddling backwards before Majesty in a procession; and if we laugh, don't you suppose the Americans laugh too?

Yes, stars, garters, orders, knighthoods, and the like, are folly. Yes, Bobus, citizen and soapboiler, is a good man, and no one laughs at him or good Mrs. Bobus, as they have their dinner at one o'clock. But who will not jeer at Sir Thomas on a melting day, and Lady Bobus, at Margate, eating shrimps in a donkey-chaise? Yes, knighthood is absurd: and chivalry an idiotic superstition: and Sir Walter Manny was a zany: and Nelson, with his flaming stars and cordons, splendent upon a day of battle, was a madman: and Murat, with his crosses and orders, at the head of his squadrons charging victorious, was only a crazy mountebank, who had been a tavern-waiter, and was puffed up with absurd vanity about his dress and legs. And the men of the French line at Fontenoy, who told Messieurs de la Garde to fire first, were smirking French dancing-masters; and the Black Prince, waiting upon his Royal prisoner, was acting an inane masquerade: and Chivalry is naught; and Honour is humbug; and Gentlemanhood is an extinct folly; and Ambition is madness; and desire of distinction is criminal vanity; and glory is bosh; and fair fame is idleness; and nothing is true but two and two; and the colour of all the world is drab; and all men are equal; and one man is as tall as another; and one man is as good as another—and a great dale betther, as the Irish philosopher said.

Is this so? Titles and badges of honour are vanity; and in the American Revolution you have his Excellency General Washington sending back, and with proper spirit sending back, a letter in

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which he is not addressed as Excellency and General. Titles are abolished; and the American Republic swarms with men claiming and bearing them. You have the French soldier cheered and happy in his dying agony, and kissing with frantic joy the chief's hand who lays the little cross on the bleeding bosom. At home you have the Dukes and Earls jobbing and intriguing for the Garter; the Military Knights grumbling at the Civil Knights of the Bath; the little ribbon eager for the collar; the soldiers and seamen from India and the Crimea marching in procession before the Queen, and receiving from her hands the cross bearing her Royal name. And, remember, there are not only the cross-wearers, but all the fathers and friends; all the women who have prayed for their absent heroes; Harry's wife, and Tom's mother, and Jack's daughter, and Frank's sweetheart, each of whom wears in her heart of hearts afterwards the badge which son, father, lover, has won by his merit; each of whom is made happy and proud, and is bound to the country by that little bit of ribbon.

I have heard, in a lecture about George the Third, that, at his accession, the King had a mind to establish an order for literary men. It was to have been called the Order of Minerva—I suppose with an Owl for a badge. The knights were to have worn a star of sixteen points, and a yellow ribbon; and good old Samuel Johnson was talked of as President, or Grand Cross, or Grand Owl, of the society. Now about such an order as this there certainly may be doubts. Consider the claimants, the difficulty of settling their claims, the rows and squabbles amongst the candidates, and the subsequent decision of posterity! Dr. Beattie would have ranked as first poet, and twenty years after the sublime Mr. Hayley would, no doubt, have claimed the Grand Cross. Mr. Gibbon would not have been eligible, on account of his dangerous free-thinking opinions; and her sex, as well as her republican sentiments, might have interfered with the knighthood of the immortal Mrs. Catharine Macaulay. How Goldsmith would have paraded the ribbon at Madame Cornelys's, or the Academy dinner! How Peter Pindar would have railed at it! Fifty years later, the noble Scott would have worn the Grand Cross and deserved it; but Gifford would have had it; and Byron, and Shelley, and Hazlitt, and Hunt would have been without it; and had Keats been proposed as officer, how the Tory prints would have yelled with rage and scorn! Had the star of Minerva lasted to our present time——but I pause, not because the idea is dazzling, but too awful. Fancy the claimants, and the row about their precedence! Which philosopher shall have the grand cordon?—which the collar?—which the little scrap no bigger than a buttercup? Of the historians—A, say,—and C, and F, and

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G, and S, and T,—which shall be Companion and which Grand Owl? Of the poets, who wears, or claims, the largest and brightest star? Of the novelists, there is A, and B and C D; and E (star of first magnitude, newly discovered), and F (a magazine of wit), and fair G, and H, and I, and brave old J, and charming K, and L, and M, and N, and O (fair twinklers), and I am puzzled between three P's—Peacock, Miss Pardoe, and Paul Pry—and Queechy, and R, and S, and T, *mère et fils*, and very likely U, O gentle reader, for who has not written his novel nowadays?—who has not a claim to the star and straw-coloured ribbon?—and who shall have the biggest and largest? Fancy the struggle! Fancy the squabble! Fancy the distribution of prizes!

Who shall decide on them? Shall it be the Sovereign? shall it be the Minister for the time being? and has Lord Palmerston made a deep study of novels? In this matter the late Ministry,* to be sure, was better qualified; but even then, grumblers who had not got their canary cordons, would have hinted at professional jealousies entering the Cabinet; and, the ribbons being awarded, Jack would have scowled at his because Dick had a broader one; Ned been indignant because Bob's was as large; Tom would have thrust his into the drawer, and scorned to wear it at all. No—no: the so-called literary world was well rid of Minerva and her yellow ribbon. The great poets would have been indifferent, the little poets jealous, the funny men furious, the philosophers satirical, the historians supercilious, and, finally, the jobs without end. Say, ingenuity and cleverness are to be rewarded by State tokens and prizes—and take for granted the Order of Minerva is established—who shall have it? A great philosopher? no doubt we cordially salute him G.C.M. A great historian? G.C.M. of course. A great engineer? G.C.M. A great poet? received with acclamation G.C.M. A great painter? oh! certainly, G.C.M. If a great painter, why not a great novelist? Well, pass, great novelist, G.C.M. But if a poetic, a pictorial, a story-telling or music-composing artist, why not a singing artist? Why not a basso-profondo? Why not a primo tenore? And if a singer, why should not a ballet-dancer come bounding on the stage with his cordon, and cut capers to the music of a row of decorated fiddlers? A chemist puts in his claim for having invented a new colour; an apothecary for a new pill; the cook for a new sauce; the tailor for a new cut of trousers. We have brought the star of Minerva down from the breast to the pantaloons. Stars and garters! can we go any farther; or shall we give the shoemaker the yellow ribbon of the order for his shoe-tie?

* That of Lord Derby, in 1859, which included Mr. Disraeli and Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.

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When I began this present Roundabout excursion, I think I had not quite made up my mind whether we would have an Order of all the Talents or not: perhaps I rather had a hankering for a rich ribbon and gorgeous star, in which my family might like to see me at parties in my best waistcoat. But then the door opens, and there come in, and by the same right too, Sir Alexis Soyer! Sir Alessandro Tamburini! Sir Agostino Velluti! Sir Antonio Paganini (violinist)! Sir Sandy McGuffog (piper to the most noble the Marquis of Farintosh)! Sir Alcide Flicflac (premier danseur of H.M. Theatre)! Sir Harley Quin and Sir Joseph Grimaldi (from Covent Garden)! They have all the yellow ribbon. They are all honourable, and clever, and distinguished artists. Let us elbow through the rooms, make a bow to the lady of the house, give a nod to Sir George Thrum, who is leading the orchestra, and go and get some champagne and seltzer-water from Sir Richard Gunter, who is presiding at the buffet. A national decoration might be well and good: a token awarded by the country to all its *benemerentibus:* but most gentlemen with Minerva stars would, I think, be inclined to wear very wide breast-collars to their coats. Suppose yourself, brother penman, decorated with this ribbon, and looking in the glass, would you not laugh? Would not wife and daughters laugh at that canary-coloured emblem?

But suppose a man, old or young, of figure ever so stout, thin, stumpy, homely, indulging in looking-glass reflections with that hideous ribbon and cross called V.C. on his coat, would he not be proud? and his family, would not they be prouder? For your nobleman there is the famous old blue garter and star, and welcome. If I were a marquis—if I had thirty—forty thousand a year (settle the sum, my dear Alnaschar, according to your liking), I should consider myself entitled to my seat in Parliament and to my garter. The garter belongs to the Ornamental Classes. Have you seen the new magnificent *Pavo spicifer* at the Zoological Gardens, and do you grudge him his jewelled coronet, and the azure splendour of his waistcoat? I like my Lord Mayor to have a gilt coach; my magnificent monarch to be surrounded by magnificent nobles: I huzzay respectfully when they pass in procession. It is good for Mr. Briefless (50 Pump Court, fourth floor), that there should be a Lord Chancellor, with a gold robe and fifteen thousand a year. It is good for a poor curate that there should be splendid bishops at Fulham and Lambeth: their Lordships were poor curates once, and have won, so to speak, their ribbon. Is a man who puts into a lottery to be sulky because he does not win the twenty thousand pounds prize? Am I to fall into a rage, and bully my family when I come home, after going to see Chatsworth or Windsor, because we

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have only two little drawing-rooms? Welcome to your garter, my Lord, and shame upon him *qui mal y pense!*

So I arrive in my roundabout way near the point towards which I have been trotting ever since we set out.

In a voyage to America, some nine years since, on the seventh or eighth day out from Liverpool, Captain L—— came to dinner at eight bells as usual, talked a little to the persons right and left of him, and helped the soup with his accustomed politeness. Then he went on deck, and was back in a minute, and operated on the fish, looking rather grave the while.

Then he went on deck again; and this time was absent, it may be, three or five minutes, during which the fish disappeared, and the *entrées* arrived, and the roast beef. Say ten minutes passed—I can't tell after nine years.

Then L—— came down with a pleased and happy countenance this time, and began carving the sirloin: "We have seen the light," he said. "Madam, may I help you to a little gravy, or a little horseradish?" or what not?

I forget the name of the light; nor does it matter. It was a point off Newfoundland for which he was on the look-out, and so well did the *Canada* know where she was, that, between soup and beef, the captain had sighted the headland by which his course was lying.

And so through storm and darkness, through fog and midnight, the ship had pursued her steady way over the pathless ocean and roaring seas, so surely that the officers who sailed her knew her place within a minute or two, and guided us with a wonderful providence safe on our way. Since the noble Cunard Company has run its ships, but one accident, and that through the error of a pilot, has happened on the line.

By this little incident (hourly of course repeated, and trivial to all sea-going people) I own I was immensely moved, and never can think of it but with a heart full of thanks and awe. We trust our lives to these seamen, and how nobly they fulfil their trust! They are, under Heaven, as a providence for us. Whilst we sleep, their untiring watchfulness keeps guard over us. All night through that bell sounds at its season, and tells how our sentinels defend us. It rang when the *Amazon* was on fire, and chimed its heroic signal of duty, and courage, and honour. Think of the dangers these seamen undergo for us: the hourly peril and watch; the familiar storm; the dreadful iceberg; the long winter nights when the decks are as glass, and the sailor has to climb through icicles to bend the stiff sail on the yard! Think of their courage and their kindnesses in cold, in tempest, in hunger, in wreck! "The women and

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children to the boats," says the captain of the *Birkenhead*, and, with the troops formed on the deck, and the crew obedient to the word of glorious command, the immortal ship goes down. Read the story of the *Sarah Sands*:—

"'SARAH SANDS.'

"The screw steamship *Sarah Sands*, 1330 registered tons, was chartered by the East India Company in the autumn of 1857, for the conveyance of troops to India. She was commanded by John Squire Castle. She took out a part of the 54th Regiment, upwards of 350 persons, besides the wives and children of some of the men, and the families of some of the officers. All went well till the 11th November, when the ship had reached lat. 14° S., long. 56° E., upwards of 400 miles from the Mauritius.

"Between three and four P.M. on that day a very strong smell of fire was perceived arising from the after-deck, and upon going below into the hold, Captain Castle found it to be on fire, and immense volumes of smoke arising from it. Endeavours were made to reach the seat of the fire, but in vain; the smoke and heat were too much for the men. There was, however, no confusion. Every order was obeyed with the same coolness and courage with which it was given. The engine was immediately stopped. All sail was taken in, and the ship brought to the wind, so as to drive the smoke and fire, which was in the after-part of the ship, astern. Others were, at the same time, getting fire-hoses fitted and passed to the scene of the fire. The fire, however, continued to increase, and attention was directed to the ammunition contained in the powder-magazines, which were situated one on each side the ship, immediately above the fire. The starboard magazine was soon cleared. But by this time the whole of the after-part of the ship was so much enveloped in smoke that it was scarcely possible to stand, and great fears were entertained on account of the port magazine. Volunteers were called for, and came immediately, and, under the guidance of Lieutenant Hughes, attempted to clear the port magazine, which they succeeded in doing, with the exception, as was supposed, of one or two barrels. It was most dangerous work. The men became overpowered with the smoke and heat, and fell; and several, while thus engaged, were dragged up by ropes, senseless.

"The flames soon burst up through the deck, and running rapidly along the various cabins, set the greater part on fire.

"In the meantime Captain Castle took steps for lowering the boats. There was a heavy gale at the time, but they were launched

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without the least accident. The soldiers were mustered on deck; —there was no rush to the boats;—and the men obeyed the word of command as if on parade. The men were informed that Captain Castle did not despair of saving the ship, but that they must be prepared to leave her if necessary. The women and children were lowered into the port lifeboat, under the charge of Mr. Very, third officer, who had orders to keep clear of the ship until recalled.

"Captain Castle then commenced constructing rafts of spare spars. In a short time, three were put together, which would have been capable of saving a great number of those on board. Two were launched overboard, and safely moored alongside, and then a third was left across the deck forward, ready to be launched.

"In the meantime the fire had made great progress. The whole of the cabins were one body of fire, and at about 8.30 P.M. flames burst through the upper deck, and shortly after the mizzen rigging caught fire. Fears were entertained of the ship paying off, in which case the flames would have been swept forwards by the wind; but fortunately the after-braces were burnt through, and the main-yard swung round, which kept the ship's head to wind. About 9 P.M. a fearful explosion took place in the port magazine, arising, no doubt, from the one or two barrels of powder which it had been impossible to remove. By this time the ship was one body of flame, from the stern to the main rigging, and thinking it scarcely possible to save her, Captain Castle called Major Brett (then in command of the troops, for the Colonel was in one of the boats) forward, and, telling him that he feared the ship was lost, requested him to endeavour to keep order among the troops till the last, but, at the same time, to use every exertion to check the fire. Providentially, the iron bulkhead in the after-part of the ship withstood the action of the flames, and here all efforts were concentrated to keep it cool.

"'No person,' says the captain, 'can describe the manner in which the men worked to keep the fire back; one party were below, keeping the bulkhead cool, and when several were dragged up senseless, fresh volunteers took their places, who were, however, soon in the same state. At about 10 P.M. the maintopsail-yard took fire. Mr. Welch, one quartermaster, and four or five soldiers, went aloft with wet blankets, and succeeded in extinguishing it, but not until the yard and mast were nearly burnt through. The work of fighting the fire below continued for hours, and about midnight it appeared that some impression was made; and after that the men drove it back, inch by inch, until daylight, when they had completely got it under. The ship was now in a frightful plight. The after-part was literally burnt out—merely the shell remaining

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—the port quarter blown out by the explosion: fifteen feet of water in the hold.'

"The gale still prevailed, and the ship was rolling and pitching in a heavy sea, and taking in large quantities of water abaft: the tanks, too, were rolling from side to side in the hold.

"As soon as the smoke was partially cleared away, Captain Castle got spare sails and blankets aft to stop the leak, passing two hawsers round the stern, and setting them up. The troops were employed baling and pumping. This continued during the whole morning.

"In the course of the day the ladies joined the ship. The boats were ordered alongside, but they found the sea too heavy to remain there. The gig had been abandoned during the night, and the crew, under Mr. Wood, fourth officer, had got into another of the boats. The troops were employed the remainder of the day baling and pumping, and the crew securing the stern. All hands were employed during the following night baling and pumping, the boats being moored alongside, where they received some damage. At daylight, on the 13th, the crew were employed hoisting the boats, the troops were working manfully baling and pumping. Latitude at noon, 13 deg. 12 min. south. At 5 P.M. the foresail and foretopsail were set, the rafts were cut away, and the ship bore for the Mauritius. On Thursday, the 19th, she sighted the Island of Rodrigues, and arrived at Mauritius on Monday the 23rd."

The Nile and Trafalgar are not more glorious to our country, are not greater victories than these won by our merchant-seamen. And if you look in the Captains' reports of any maritime register, you will see similar acts recorded every day. I have such a volume for last year now lying before me. In the second number, as I open it at hazard, Captain Roberts, master of the ship *Empire*, from Shields to London, reports how on the 14th ult. (the 14th of December 1859), he,

"being off Whitby, discovered the ship to be on fire between the main hold and boilers: got the hose from the engine laid on, and succeeded in subduing the fire; but only apparently; for at seven the next morning, the *Dudgeon* bearing S.S.E. seven miles' distance, the fire again broke out, causing the ship to be enveloped in flames on both sides of midships: got the hose again into play, and all hands to work with buckets to combat with the fire. Did not succeed in stopping it till four P.M., to effect which, were obliged to cut away the deck and top sides, and throw overboard part of the cargo. The vessel was very much damaged and leaky: determined

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to make for the Humber. Ship was run on shore on the mud, near Grimsby harbour, with five feet of water in her hold. The donkey-engine broke down. The water increased so fast as to put out the furnace fires and render the ship almost unmanageable. On the tide flowing a tug towed the ship off the mud, and got her into Grimsby to repair."

On the 2nd of November, Captain Strickland, of the *Purchase* brigantine from Liverpool to Yarmouth, U.S.,

"encountered heavy gales from W.N.W. to W.S.W., in lat. 43° N., long. 34° W., in which we lost jib, foretopmast, staysail, topsail, and carried away the foretopmast stays, bobstays and bowsprit, headsails, cutwater and stern, also started the wood ends, which caused the vessel to leak. Put her before the wind and sea, and hove about twenty-five tons of cargo overboard to lighten the ship forward. Slung myself in a bowline, and by means of thrusting 2½-inch rope in the opening, contrived to stop a great portion of the leak.

"*December* 16*th.*—The crew continuing night and day at the pumps, could not keep the ship free; deemed it prudent for the benefit of those concerned to bear up for the nearest port. On arriving in lat. 48° 45′ N., long. 23° W., observed a vessel with a signal of distress flying. Made towards her, when she proved to be the barque *Carleton*, water-logged. The captain and crew asked to be taken off. Hove to, and received them on board, consisting of thirteen men: and their ship was abandoned. We then proceeded on our course, the crew of the abandoned vessel assisting all they could to keep my ship afloat. We arrived at Cork harbour on the 27th ult."

Captain Coulson, master of the brig *Othello*, reports that his brig foundered off Portland, December 27;—encountering a strong gale, and shipping two heavy seas in succession, which hove the ship on her beam-ends.

"Observing no chance of saving the ship, took to the long-boat, and within ten minutes of leaving her saw the brig founder. We were picked up the same morning by the French ship *Commerce de Paris*, Captain Tombarel."

Here, in a single column of a newspaper, what strange touching pictures do we find of seamen's dangers, vicissitudes, gallantry, generosity! The ship on fire—the captain in the gale slinging himself in a bowline to stop the leak—the Frenchman in the hour

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of danger coming to his British comrade's rescue—the brigantine, almost a wreck, working up to the barque, with the signal of distress flying, and taking off her crew of thirteen men.

"We then proceeded on our course, *the crew of the abandoned vessel assisting all they could to keep my ship afloat.*"

What noble simple words! What courage, devotedness, brotherly love! Do they not cause the heart to beat and the eyes to fill?

This is what seamen do daily, and for one another. One lights occasionally upon different stories. It happened, not very long since, that the passengers by one of the great ocean steamers were wrecked, and, after undergoing the most severe hardships, were left, destitute and helpless, at a miserable coaling port. Amongst them were old men, ladies, and children. When the next steamer arrived, the passengers by that steamer took alarm at the haggard and miserable appearance of their unfortunate predecessors, and actually *remonstrated with their own captain, urging him not to take the poor creatures on board.* There was every excuse of course. The last arrived steamer was already dangerously full: the cabins were crowded; there were sick and delicate people on board—sick and delicate people who had paid a large price to the Company for room, food, comfort, already not too sufficient. If fourteen of us are in an omnibus, will we see three or four women outside and say, "Come in, because this is the last 'bus, and it rains"? Of course not: but think of that remonstrance, and of that Samaritan master of the *Purchase* brigantine!

In the winter of '53, I went from Marseilles to Civita Vecchia in one of the magnificent P. and O. ships, the *Valetta*, the master of which subsequently did distinguished service in the Crimea. This was his first Mediterranean voyage, and he sailed his ship by the charts alone, going into each port as surely as any pilot. I remember walking the deck at night with this most skilful, gallant, well-bred, and well-educated gentleman, and the glow of eager enthusiasm with which he assented, when I asked him whether he did not think a RIBBON or ORDER would be welcome or useful in his service.

Why is there not an ORDER OF BRITANNIA for British seamen? In the Merchant and the Royal Navy alike, occur almost daily instances and occasions for the display of science, skill, bravery, fortitude in trying circumstances, resource in danger. In the first number of the *Cornhill Magazine*, a friend contributed a most touching story of the M'Clintock expedition, in the dangers and

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dreadful glories of which he shared; and the writer was a merchant captain. How many more are there (and, for the honour of England, may there be many like him!)—gallant, accomplished, high-spirited, enterprising masters of their noble profession! Can our fountain of Honour not be brought to such men? It plays upon captains and colonels in seemly profusion. It pours forth not illiberal rewards upon doctors and judges. It sprinkles mayors and aldermen. It bedews a painter now and again. It has spirted a baronetcy upon two, and bestowed a coronet upon one noble man of letters. Diplomatists take their Bath in it as of right; and it flings out a profusion of glittering stars upon the nobility of the three kingdoms. Cannot Britannia find a ribbon for her sailors? The Navy, Royal or mercantile, is a *Service*. The command of a ship, or the conduct of her, implies danger, honour, science, skill, subordination, good faith. It may be a victory, such as that of the *Sarah Sands;* it may be discovery, such as that of the *Fox;* it may be heroic disaster, such as that of the *Birkenhead;* and in such events merchant seamen, as well as Royal seamen, take their share.

Why is there not, then, an Order of Britannia? One day a young officer of the *Euryalus* * may win it; and, having just read the memoirs of LORD DUNDONALD, I know who ought to have the first Grand Cross.

* Prince Alfred was serving on board the frigate *Euryalus* when this was written.

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ON SOME LATE GREAT VICTORIES

ON the 18th day of April last I went to see a friend in a neighbouring Crescent, and on the steps of the next house beheld a group something like that depicted on the next page. A newsboy had stopped in his walk, and was reading aloud the journal which it was his duty to deliver; a pretty orange-girl, with a heap of blazing fruit, rendered more brilliant by one of those great blue papers in which oranges are now artfully wrapped, leant over the railing and listened; and opposite the *nympham discentem* there was a capering and acute-eared young satirist of a crossing-sweeper, who had left his neighbouring professional avocation and chance of profit, in order to listen to the tale of the little newsboy.

That intelligent reader, with his hand following the line as he read it out to his audience, was saying:—"And—now—Tom—coming up smiling—after his fall—dee—delivered a rattling clinker upon the Benicia Boy's—potato-trap—but was met by a—punisher on the nose—which," &c. &c.; or words to that effect. Betty at 52 let me in, while the boy was reading his lecture; and, having been some twenty minutes or so in the house, and paid my visit, I took leave.

The little lecturer was still at work on the 51 doorstep, and his audience had scarcely changed their position. Having read every word of the battle myself in the morning, I did not stay to listen further; but if the gentleman who expected his paper at the usual hour that day experienced delay and a little disappointment, I shall not be surprised.

I am not going to expatiate on the battle. I have read in the correspondent's letter of a Northern newspaper, that in the midst of the company assembled the reader's humble servant was present, and in a very polite society, too, of "poets, clergymen, men of letters, and members of both Houses of Parliament." If so, I must have walked to the station in my sleep, paid three guineas in a profound fit of mental abstraction, and returned to bed unconscious, for I certainly woke there about the time when history relates that the fight was over. I do not know whose colours I wore—the Benician's, or those of the English champion; nor remember where

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the fight took place, which, indeed, no somnambulist is bound to recollect. Ought Mr. Sayers to be honoured for being brave, or punished for being naughty? By the shade of Brutus the elder, I don't know.

In George II.'s time, there was a turbulent navy lieutenant (Handsome Smith he was called—his picture is at Greenwich now, in brown velvet, and gold and scarlet; his coat handsome, his waistcoat exceedingly handsome; but his face by no means the

beauty)—there was, I say, a turbulent young lieutenant who was broke on a complaint of the French ambassador, for obliging a French ship of war to lower her topsails to his ship at Spithead. But, by the King's orders, Tom was next day made Captain Smith. Well, if I were absolute king, I would send Tom Sayers to the mill for a month, and make him Sir Thomas on coming out of Clerkenwell. You are a naughty boy, Tom! but then, you know, we ought to love our brethren, though ever so naughty. We are moralists,

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and reprimand you; and you are hereby reprimanded accordingly. But in case England should ever have need of a few score thousand champions, who laugh at danger; who cope with giants; who, stricken to the ground, jump up and gaily rally, and fall, and rise again, and strike, and die rather than yield—in case the country should need such men, and you should know them, be pleased to send lists of the misguided persons to the principal police stations, where means may some day be found to utilise their wretched powers, and give their deplorable energies a right direction. Suppose, Tom, that you and your friends are pitted against an immense invader—suppose you are bent on holding the ground, and dying there, if need be—suppose it is life, freedom, honour, home, you are fighting for, and there is a death-dealing sword or rifle in your hand, with which you are going to resist some tremendous enemy who challenges your championship on your native shore? Then, Sir Thomas, resist him to the death, and it is all right: kill him, and Heaven bless you. Drive him into the sea, and there destroy, smash, and drown him; and let us sing *Laudamus*. In these national cases, you see, we override the indisputable first laws of morals. Loving your neighbour is very well; but suppose your neighbour comes over from Calais and Boulogne to rob you of your laws, your liberties, your newspapers, your parliament (all of which *some* dear neighbours of ours have given up in the most self-denying manner): suppose any neighbour were to cross the water and propose this kind of thing to us? Should we not be justified in humbly trying to pitch him into the water? If it were the King of Belgium himself, we must do so. I mean that fighting, of course, is wrong; but that there are occasions when, &c.—I suppose I mean that that one-handed fight of Sayers is one of the most spirit-stirring little stories ever told: and with every love and respect for Morality—my spirit says to her, "Do, for goodness' sake, my dear madam, keep your true, and pure, and womanly, and gentle remarks for another day. Have the great kindness to stand a *leetle* aside, and just let us see one or two more rounds between the men. That little man with the one hand powerless on his breast facing yonder giant for hours, and felling him, too, every now and then! It is the little 'Java' and the 'Constitution' over again."

I think it is a most fortunate event for the brave Heenan, who has acted and written since the battle with a true warrior's courtesy and with a great deal of good logic too, that the battle was a drawn one. The advantage was all on Mr. Sayers's side. Say a young lad of sixteen insults me in the street, and I try and thrash him, and do it. Well, I have thrashed a young lad. You great big tyrant, couldn't you hit one of your own size? But say the lad

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A GREAT BATTLE

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thrashes me? In either case I walk away discomfited: but in the latter, I am positively put to shame. Now, when the ropes were cut from that death-grip, and Sir Thomas released, the gentleman of Benicia was confessedly blind of one eye, and speedily afterwards was blind of both. Could Mr. Sayers have held out for three minutes, for five minutes, for ten minutes more? He says he could. So we say *we* could have held out, and did, and had beaten off the enemy at Waterloo, even if the Prussians hadn't come up. The opinions differ pretty much according to the nature of the opinants. I say the Duke and Tom could have held out, that they meant to hold out, that they did hold out, and that there has been fistifying enough. That crowd which came in and stopped the fight ought to be considered like one of those divine clouds which the gods send in Homer :—

"Apollo shrouds
The godlike Trojan in a veil of clouds."

It is the best way of getting the god-like Trojan out of the scrape, don't you see? The *nodus* is cut; Tom is out of chancery; the Benicia Boy not a bit the worse, nay, better than if he had beaten the little man. He has not the humiliation of conquest. He is greater, and will be loved more hereafter by the gentle sex. Suppose he had overcome the god-like Trojan? Suppose he had tied Tom's corpse to his cab-wheels, and driven to Farnham, smoking the pipe of triumph? Faugh! the great hulking conqueror! Why did you not hold your hand from yonder hero? Everybody, I say, was relieved by that opportune appearance of the British gods, protectors of native valour, who interfered, and "withdrew" their champion.

Now, suppose six-feet-two conqueror, and five-feet-eight beaten; would Sayers have been a whit the less gallant and meritorious? If Sancho had been allowed *really* to reign in Barataria, I make no doubt that, with his good sense and kindness of heart, he would have devised some means of rewarding the brave vanquished, as well as the brave victors in the Baratarian army, and that a champion who had fought a good fight would have been a knight of King Don Sancho's orders, whatever the upshot of the combat had been. Suppose Wellington overwhelmed on the plateau of Mont Saint Jean; suppose Washington attacked and beaten at Valley Forge—and either supposition is quite easy—and what becomes of the heroes? They would have been as brave, honest, heroic, wise; but their glory, where would it have been? Should we have had their portraits hanging in our chambers? have been familiar with their histories? have pondered over their letters,

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common lives, and daily sayings? There is not only merit, but luck, which goes to making a hero out of a gentleman. Mind, please you, I am not saying that the hero is after all not so very heroic; and have not the least desire to grudge him his merit because of his good fortune.

Have you any idea whither this Roundabout Essay on some late great victories is tending? Do you suppose that by those words I mean Trenton, Brandywine, Salamanca, Vittoria, and so forth? By a great victory I can't mean that affair at Farnham, for it was a drawn fight. Where, then, are the victories, pray, and when are we coming to them?

My good sir, you will perceive that in this Nicæan discourse I have only as yet advanced as far as this—that a hero, whether he wins or loses, is a hero; and that if a fellow will but be honest and courageous, and do his best, we are for paying all honour to him. Furthermore, it has been asserted that Fortune has a good deal to do with the making of heroes; and thus hinted for the consolation of those who don't happen to be engaged in any stupendous victories, that, had opportunity so served, they might have been heroes too. If you are not, friend, it is not your fault, whilst I don't wish to detract from any gentleman's reputation who is. There! My worst enemy can't take objection to that. The point might have been put more briefly perhaps; but, if you please, we will not argue that question.

Well, then. The victories which I wish especially to commemorate in this paper, are the six great, complete, prodigious, and undeniable victories, achieved by the corps which the editor of the *Cornhill Magazine* has the honour to command. When I seemed to speak disparagingly but now of generals, it was that chief I had in my I (if you will permit me the expression). I wished him not to be elated by too much prosperity; I warned him against assuming heroic imperatorial airs, and cocking his laurels too jauntily over his ear. I was his conscience, and stood on the splash-board of his triumph-car, whispering, "Hominem memento te." As we rolled along the way, and passed the weathercocks on the temples, I saluted the symbol of the goddess Fortune with a reverent awe. "We have done our little endeavour," I said, bowing my head, "and mortals can do no more. But we might have fought bravely, and *not* won. We might have cast the coin, calling 'Head,' and lo! Tail might have come uppermost." O thou Ruler of Victories! —thou Awarder of Fame!—thou Giver of Crowns (and shillings)—if thou hast smiled upon us, shall we not be thankful? There is a Saturnine philosopher, standing at the door of his book-shop, who, I fancy, has a pooh-pooh expression as the triumph passes. (I

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can't see quite clearly for the laurels, which have fallen down over my nose.) One hand is reining in the two white elephants that draw the car; I raise the other hand up to—to the laurels, and pass on, waving him a graceful recognition. Up the Hill of Ludgate—around the Pauline Square—by the side of Chepe—until it reaches our own Hill of Corn—the procession passes. The Imperator is bowing to the people; the captains of the legions are riding round the car, their gallant minds struck by the thought, "Have we not fought as well as yonder fellow, swaggering in the chariot, and are we not as good as he?" Granted, with all my heart, my dear lads. When your consulship arrives, may you be as fortunate. When these hands, now growing old, shall lay down sword and truncheon, may you mount the car, and ride to the temple of Jupiter. Be yours the laurel then. *Neque me myrtus dedecet*, looking cosily down from the arbour where I sit under the arched vine.

I fancy the Imperator standing on the steps of the temple (erected by Titus) on the Mons Frumentarius, and addressing the citizens: "Quirites!" he says, "in our campaign of six months, we have been engaged six times, and in each action have taken near upon a *hundred thousand prisoners*. Go to! What are other magazines compared to our magazine? (Sound, trumpeter!) What banner is there like that of Cornhill? You, philosopher yonder!" (he shirks under his mantle). "Do you know what it is to have a hundred and ten thousand readers? A hundred thousand readers? a hundred thousand *buyers!*" (Cries of "No!" "Pooh!" "Yes, upon my hónour!" "Oh, come!" and murmurs of applause and derision)—"I say more than a hundred thousand purchasers—and I believe *as much as a million* readers!" (Immense sensation.) "To these have we said an unkind word? We have enemies; have we hit them an unkind blow? Have we sought to pursue party aims, to forward private jobs, to advance selfish schemes? The only persons to whom wittingly we have given pain are some who have volunteered for our corps—and of these volunteers we have had *thousands*." (Murmurs and grumbles.) "What commander, citizens, could place all these men—could make officers of all these men?" (cries of "No—no!" and laughter)—"could say, 'I accept this recruit, though he is too short for our standard, because he is poor, and has a mother at home who wants bread?' could enrol this other, who is too weak to bear arms, because he says, 'Look, sir, I shall be stronger anon.' The leader of such an army as ours must select his men, not because they are good and virtuous, but because they are strong and capable. To these our ranks are ever open, and in addition to the warriors who surround me"—(the generals look proudly conscious)—"I tell you, citizens, that I am

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in treaty with other and most tremendous champions, who will march by the side of our veterans to the achievement of fresh victories. Now, blow trumpets! Bang, ye gongs! and drummers, drub the thundering skins! Generals and chiefs, we go to sacrifice to the gods."

Crowned with flowers, the captains enter the temple, the other Magazines walking modestly behind them. The people huzza; and, in some instances, kneel and kiss the fringes of the robes of the warriors. The Philosopher puts up his shutters, and retires into his shop, deeply moved. In ancient times Pliny (*apud* Smith) relates it was the custom of the Imperator "to paint his whole body a bright red;" and, also, on ascending the Hill, to have some of the hostile chiefs led aside "to the adjoining prison, and put to death." We propose to dispense with both these ceremonies.

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THORNS IN THE CUSHION

IN the first of these Essays, the *Cornhill Magazine* was likened to a ship sailing forth on her voyage, and the captain uttered a very sincere prayer for her prosperity. The dangers of storm and rock, the vast outlay upon ship and cargo, and the certain risk of the venture, gave the chief officer a feeling of no small anxiety; for who could say from what quarter danger might arise, and how his owner's property might be imperilled? After a six months' voyage, we with very thankful hearts could acknowledge our good fortune: and, taking up the apologue in the Roundabout manner, we composed a triumphal procession in honour of the Magazine, and imagined the Imperator thereof riding in a sublime car to return thanks in the Temple of Victory. Cornhill is accustomed to grandeur and greatness, and has witnessed, every ninth of November, for I don't know how many centuries, a prodigious annual pageant, chariot, progress, and flourish of trumpetry; and being so very near the Mansion House, I am sure the reader will understand how the idea of pageant and procession came naturally to my mind. The imagination easily supplied a gold coach, eight cream-coloured horses of your true Pegasus breed, huzzaying multitudes, running footmen, and clanking knights in armour, a chaplain and a sword-bearer with a muff on his head, scowling out of the coach window, and a Lord Mayor all crimson, fur, gold-chain, and white ribbons, solemnly occupying the place of state. A playful fancy could have carried the matter farther, could have depicted the feast in the Egyptian Hall, the Ministers, Chief Justices, and right reverend prelates taking their seats round about his Lordship, the turtle and other delicious viands, and Mr. Toole behind the central throne, bawling out to the assembled guests and dignitaries: "My Lord So-and-so, My Lord What-d'ye-call-'im, my Lord Etcætera, the Lord Mayor pledges you all in a loving cup." Then the noble proceedings come to an end; Lord Simper proposes the ladies; the company rises from table, and adjourns to coffee and muffins. The carriages of the nobility and guests roll back to the West. The Egyptian Hall, so bright just now, appears in a

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twilight glimmer, in which waiters are seen ransacking the dessert, and rescuing the spoons. His Lordship and the Lady Mayoress go into their private apartments. The robes are doffed, the collar and white ribbons are removed. The Mayor becomes a man, and is pretty surely in a fluster about the speeches which he has just uttered; remembering too well now, wretched creature, the principal points which he *didn't* make when he rose to speak. He goes to bed to headache, to care, to repentance, and, I daresay, to a dose of something which his body physician has prescribed for him. And there are ever so many men in the City who fancy that man happy!

Now, suppose that all through that 9th of November his Lordship has had a racking rheumatism, or a toothache, let us say, during all dinner-time—through which he has been obliged to grin and mumble his poor old speeches. Is he enviable? Would you like to change with his Lordship? Suppose that bumper which his golden footman brings him, instead i'fackins of ypocras or canary, containss ome abomination of senna? Away! Remove the golden goblet, insidious cup-bearer! You now begin to perceive the gloomy moral which I am about to draw.

Last month we sang the song of glorification, and rode in the chariot of triumph. It was all very well. It was right to huzza, and be thankful, and cry, Bravo, our side! and besides, you know, there was the enjoyment of thinking how pleased Brown, and Jones, and Robinson (our dear friends) would be at this announcement of success. But now that the performance is over, my good sir, just step into my private room, and see that it is not all pleasure—this winning of successes. Cast your eye over those newspapers, over those letters. See what the critics say of your harmless jokes, neat little trim sentences, and pet waggeries! Why, you are no better than an idiot; you are drivelling; your powers have left you; this always overrated writer is rapidly sinking to——, &c.

This is not pleasant; but neither is this the point. It may be the critic is right, and the author wrong. It may be that the archbishop's sermon is not so fine as some of those discourses twenty years ago which used to delight the faithful in Granada. Or it may be (pleasing thought!) that the critic is a dullard, and does not understand what he is writing about. Everybody who has been to an exhibition has heard visitors discoursing about the pictures before their faces. One says, "This is very well;" another says, "This is stuff and rubbish;" another cries, "Bravo! this is a masterpiece:" and each has a right to his opinion. For example, one of the pictures I admired most at the Royal Academy is by a

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gentleman on whom I never, to my knowledge, set eyes. This picture is No. 346, "Moses," by Mr. S. Solomon. I thought it had a great intention, I thought it finely drawn and composed. It nobly represented, to my mind, the dark children of the Egyptian bondage, and suggested the touching story. My newspaper says: "Two ludicrously ugly women, looking at a dingy baby, do not form a pleasing object;" and so good-bye, Mr. Solomon. Are not most of our babies served so in life? and doesn't Mr. Robinson consider Mr. Brown's cherub an ugly squalling little brat? So cheer up, Mr. S. S. It may be the critic who discoursed on your baby is a bad judge of babies. When Pharaoh's kind daughter found the child, and cherished and loved it, and took it home, and found a nurse for it, too, I daresay there were grim, brickdust-coloured chamberlains, or some of the tough, old, meagre, yellow princesses at Court, who never had children themselves, who cried out, "Faugh! the horrid little squalling wretch!" and knew he would never come to good; and said, "Didn't I tell you so?" when he assaulted the Egyptian.

Never mind then, Mr. S. Solomon, I say, because a critic pooh-poohs your work of art—your Moses—your child—your foundling. Why, did not a wiseacre in *Blackwood's Magazine* lately fall foul of "Tom Jones"? O hypercritic! So, to be sure, did good old Mr. Richardson, who could write novels himself; but you, and I, and Mr. Gibbon, my dear sir, agree in giving our respect, and wonder, and admiration, to the brave old master.

In these last words I am supposing the respected reader to be endowed with a sense of humour, which he may or may not possess; indeed, don't we know many an honest man who can no more comprehend a joke than he can turn a tune? But I take for granted, my dear sir, that you are brimming over with fun—you mayn't make jokes, but you could if you would—you know you could: and in your quiet way you enjoy them extremely. Now many people neither make them, nor understand them when made, nor like them when understood, and are suspicious, testy, and angry with jokers. Have you ever watched an elderly male or female—an elderly "party," so to speak, who begins to find out that some young wag of the company is "chaffing" him? Have you ever tried the sarcastic or Socratic method with a child? Little simple he or she, in the innocence of the simple heart, plays some silly freak, or makes some absurd remark, which you turn to ridicule. The little creature dimly perceives that you are making fun of him, writhes, blushes, grows uneasy, bursts into tears,—upon my word it is not fair to try the weapon of ridicule upon that innocent young victim. The awful objurgatory practice he is accustomed to

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Point out his fault, and lay bare the dire consequences thereof: expose it roundly, and give him a proper, solemn, moral whipping—but do not attempt to *castigare ridendo*. Do not laugh at him writhing, and cause all the other boys in the school to laugh. Remember your own young days at school, my friend—the tingling cheeks, burning ears, bursting heart, and passion of desperate tears, with which you looked up, after having performed some blunder, whilst the Doctor held you to public scorn before the class, and cracked his great clumsy jokes upon you—helpless, and a prisoner! Better the block itself, and the lictors, with their fasces of birch-twigs, than the maddening torture of those jokes!

Now, with respect to jokes—and the present company of course excepted—many people, perhaps most people, are as infants. They have little sense of humour. They don't like jokes. Raillery in writing annoys and offends them. The coarseness apart, I think I have met very very few women who liked the banter of Swift and Fielding. Their simple tender natures revolt at laughter. Is the satyr always a wicked brute at heart, and are they rightly shocked at his grin, his leer, his horns, hoofs, and ears? *Fi donc, le vilain monstre*, with his shrieks, and his capering crooked legs! Let him go and get a pair of well-wadded black silk stockings, and pull them over those horrid shanks; put a large gown and bands over beard and hide; and pour a dozen of lavender-water into his lawn handkerchief, and cry, and never make a joke again. It shall all be highly-distilled poesy, and perfumed sentiment, and gushing eloquence; and the foot *shan't* peep out, and a plague take it. Cover it up with the surplice. Out with your cambric, dear ladies, and let us all whimper together.

Now, then, hand on heart, we declare that it is not the fire of adverse critics which afflicts or frightens the editorial bosom. They may be right; they may be rogues who have a personal spite; they may be dullards who kick and bray as their nature is to do, and prefer thistles to pineapples; they may be conscientious, acute, deeply learned, delightful judges, who see your joke in a moment, and the profound wisdom lying underneath. Wise or dull, laudatory or otherwise, we put their opinions aside. If they applaud, we are pleased: if they shake their quick pens, and fly off with a hiss, we resign their favours and put on all the fortitude we can muster. I would rather have the lowest man's good word than his bad one, to be sure; but as for coaxing a compliment, or wheedling him into good-humour, or stopping his angry mouth with a good dinner, or accepting his contributions for a certain Magazine, for fear of his barking or snapping elsewhere—*allons donc!* These shall not be our acts. Bow-wow, Cerberus! Here shall be no sop

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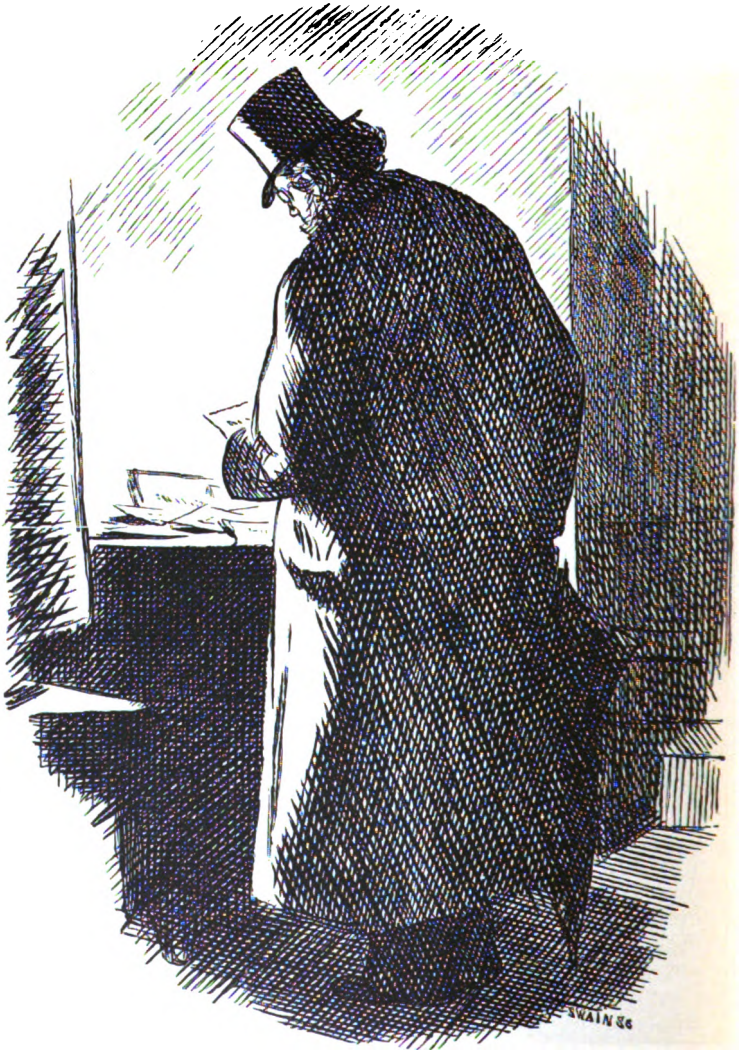

THE EVENING POST

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for thee, unless—unless Cerberus is an uncommonly good dog, when we shall bear no malice because he flew at us from our neighbour's gate.

What, then, is the main grief you spoke of as annoying you—the toothache in the Lord Mayor's jaw, the thorn in the cushion of the editorial chair? It is there. Ah! it stings me now as I write. It comes with almost every morning's post. At night I come home, and take my letters up to bed (not daring to open them), and in the morning I find one, two, three thorns on my pillow. Three I extracted yesterday; two I found this morning. They don't sting quite so sharply as they did; but a skin is a skin, and they bite, after all, most wickedly. It is all very fine to advertise on the Magazine, "Contributions are only to be sent to Messrs. Smith, Elder, & Co., and not to the Editor's private residence." My dear sir, how little you know man- or woman-kind, if you fancy they will take that sort of warning! How am I to know (though, to be sure, I begin to know now), as I take the letters off the tray, which of those envelopes contains a real *bonâ fide* letter, and which a thorn? One of the best invitations this year I mistook for a thorn-letter, and kept it without opening. This is what I call a thorn-letter:—

"CAMBERWELL: *June* 4.

"SIR,—May I hope, may I entreat, that you will favour me by perusing the enclosed lines, and that they may be found worthy of insertion in the *Cornhill Magazine*? We have known better days, sir. I have a sick and widowed mother to maintain, and little brothers and sisters who look to me. I do my utmost as a governess to support them. I toil at night when they are at rest, and my own hand and brain are alike tired. If I could add but *a little* to our means by my pen, many of my poor invalid's wants might be supplied, and I could procure for her comforts to which she is now a stranger. Heaven knows it is not for want of *will* or for want of *energy* on my part that she is now in ill-health, and our little household almost without bread. Do—do cast a kind glance over my poem, and if you can help us, the widow, the orphans will bless you!—I remain, sir, in anxious expectancy, your faithful servant, S. S. S."

And enclosed is a little poem or two, and an envelope with its penny stamp—Heaven help us!—and the writer's name and address.

Now you see what I mean by a thorn. Here is the case put with true female logic. "I am poor; I am good; I am ill; I

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work hard; I have a sick mother and hungry brothers and sisters dependent on me. You can help us if you will." And then I look at the paper, with the thousandth part of a faint hope that it may be suitable, and I find it won't do: and I knew it wouldn't do: and why is this poor lady to appeal to my pity and bring her poor little ones kneeling to my bedside, and calling for bread which I can give them if I choose? No day passes but that argument *ad misericordiam* is used. Day and night that sad voice is crying out for help. Thrice it appealed to me yesterday. Twice this morning it cried to me: and I have no doubt when I go to get my hat, I shall find it with its piteous face and its pale family about it, waiting for me in the hall. One of the immense advantages which women have over our sex is, that they actually like to read these letters. Like letters? Oh mercy on us! Before I was an editor I did not like the postman much:—but now!

A very common way with these petitioners is to begin with a fine flummery about the merits and eminent genius of the person whom they are addressing. But this artifice, I state publicly, is of no avail. When I see *that* kind of herb, I know the snake within it, and fling it away before it has time to sting. Away, reptile, to the waste-paper basket, and thence to the flames!

But of these disappointed people, some take their disappointment and meekly bear it. Some hate and hold you their enemy because you could not be their friend. Some, furious and envious, say: "Who is this man who refuses what I offer? and how dares he, the conceited coxcomb, to deny my merit?"

Sometimes my letters contain not mere thorns, but bludgeons. Here are two choice slips from that noble Irish oak which has more than once supplied alpeens for this meek and unoffending skull:—

"THEATRE ROYAL, DONNYBROOK.

"SIR,—I have just finished reading the first portion of your Tale, 'Lovel the Widower,' and am much surprised at the unwarrantable strictures you pass therein on the *corps de ballet*.

"I have been for more than ten years connected with the theatrical profession, and I beg to assure you that the majority of the *corps de ballet* are virtuous well-conducted girls, and, consequently, that snug cottages are not taken for them in the Regent's Park.

"I also have to inform you that theatrical managers are in the habit of speaking good English, possibly better English than authors.

"You either know nothing of the subject in question, or you assert a wilful falsehood.

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"I am happy to say that the characters of the *corps de ballet*, as also those of actors and actresses, are superior to the snarlings of dyspeptic libellers, or the spiteful attacks and *brutum fulmen* of ephemeral authors.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"A. B. C.

"The Editor of the *Cornhill Magazine*."

"THEATRE ROYAL, DONNYBROOK.

"SIR,—I have just read, in the *Cornhill Magazine* for January, the first portion of a Tale written by you, and entitled 'Lovel the Widower.'

"In the production in question you employ all your malicious spite (and you have great capabilities that way) in trying to degrade the character of the *corps de ballet*. When you imply that the majority of ballet-girls have villas taken for them in the Regent's Park, *I say you tell a deliberate falsehood*.

"Haveing been brought up to the stage from infancy, and, though now an actress, haveing been seven years principal dancer at the opera, I am competent to speak on the subject. I am only surprised that so vile a libeller as yourself should be allowed to preside at the Dramatic Fund dinner on the 22nd instant. I think it would be much better if you were to reform your own life, instead of telling lies of those who are immeasurably your superiors.—Yours in supreme disgust, A. D."

The signatures of the respected writers are altered, and for the site of their Theatre Royal an adjacent place is named, which (as I may have been falsely informed) used to be famous for quarrels, thumps, and broken heads. But, I say, is this an easy chair to sit on, when you are liable to have a pair of such shillelaghs flung at it? And, prithee, what was all the quarrel about? In the little history of "Lovel the Widower" I described, and brought to condign punishment, a certain wretch of a ballet-dancer, who lived splendidly for a while on ill-gotten gains, had an accident, and lost her beauty, and died poor, deserted, ugly, and every way odious. In the same page, other little ballet-dancers are described, wearing homely clothing, doing their duty, and carrying their humble savings to the family at home. But nothing will content my dear correspondents but to have me declare that the majority of ballet-dancers have villas in the Regent's Park, and to convict me of "deliberate falsehood." Suppose, for instance, I had chosen to introduce a red-haired washerwoman into a story? I might get an expostulatory letter saying, "Sir, in stating that the majority of washerwomen are red-haired, you are a liar! and you had best

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not speak of ladies who are immeasurably your superiors." Or suppose I had ventured to describe an illiterate haberdasher? One of the craft might write to me, "Sir, in describing haberdashers as illiterate, you utter a wilful falsehood. Haberdashers use much better English than authors." It is a mistake, to be sure. I have never said what my correspondents say I say. There is the text under their noses, but what if they choose to read it their own way? "Hurroo, lads! Here's for a fight. There's a bald head peeping out of the hut. There's a bald head! It must be Tim Malone's." And whack! come down both the bludgeons at once.

Ah me! we wound where we never intended to strike; we create anger where we never meant harm; and these thoughts are the thorns in our Cushion. Out of mere malignity, I suppose, there is no man who would like to make enemies. But here, in this editorial business, you can't do otherwise: and a queer, sad, strange, bitter thought it is, that must cross the mind of many a public man: "Do what I will, be innocent or spiteful, be generous or cruel, there are A and B, and C and D, who will hate me to the end of the chapter—to the chapter's end—to the Finis of the page —when hate, and envy, and fortune, and disappointment shall be over."

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ON SCREENS IN DINING-ROOMS

A GRANDSON of the late Rev. Dr. Primrose (of Wakefield, vicar) wrote me a little note from his country living this morning, and the kind fellow had the precaution to write "No thorn" upon the envelope, so that, ere I broke the seal, my mind might be relieved of any anxiety lest the letter should contain one of those lurking stabs which are so painful to the present gentle writer. Your epigraph, my dear P., shows your kind and artless nature; but don't you see it is of no use? People who are bent upon assassinating you in the manner mentioned will write "No thorn" upon their envelopes too; and you open the case, and presently out flies a poisoned stiletto, which springs into a man's bosom, and makes the wretch howl with anguish. When the bailiffs are after a man, they adopt all sorts of disguises, pop out on him from all conceivable corners, and tap his miserable shoulder. His wife is taken ill; his sweetheart, who remarked his brilliant, too brilliant appearance at the Hyde Park review, will meet him at Cremorne, or where you will. The old friend who has owed him that money these five years will meet him at So-and-so and pay. By one bait or other the victim is hooked, netted, landed, and down goes the basket-lid. It is not your wife, your sweetheart, your friend, who is going to pay you. It is Mr. Nab the bailiff. *You* know——you are caught. You are off in a cab to Chancery Lane.

You know, I say? *Why* should you know? I make no manner of doubt you never were taken by a bailiff in your life. I never was. I have been in two or three debtors' prisons, but not on my own account. Goodness be praised! I mean you can't escape your lot; and Nab only stands here metaphorically as the watchful, certain, and untiring officer of Mr. Sheriff Fate. Why, my dear Primrose, this morning along with your letter comes another, bearing the well-known superscription of another old friend, which I open without the least suspicion, and what do I find? A few lines from my friend Johnson, it is true, but they are written on a page covered with feminine handwriting. "Dear Mr. Johnson," says the

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writer, "I have just been perusing with delight a most charming tale by the Archbishop of Cambray. It is called 'Telemachus'; and I think it would be admirably suited to the *Cornhill Magazine*. As you know the Editor, will you have the great kindness, dear Mr. Johnson, to communicate with him *personally* (as that is much better than writing in a roundabout way to the Publishers, and waiting goodness knows how long for an answer), and state my readiness to translate this excellent and instructive story? I do not wish to breathe *a word* against 'Lovel Parsonage,' 'Framley the Widower,' or any of the novels which have appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*, but I *am sure* 'Telemachus' is as good as new to English readers, and in point of interest and morality *far*——" &c. &c. &c.

There it is. I am stabbed through Johnson. He has lent himself to this attack on me. He is weak about women. Other strong men are. He submits to the common lot, poor fellow. In my reply I do not use a word of unkindness. I write him back gently, that I fear "Telemachus" won't suit us. He can send the letter on to his fair correspondent. But however soft the answer, I question whether the wrath will be turned away. Will there not be a coolness between him and the lady? and is it not possible that henceforth her fine eyes will look with darkling glances upon the pretty orange cover of our Magazine?

Certain writers, they say, have a bad opinion of women. Now am I very whimsical in supposing that this disappointed candidate will be hurt at her rejection, and angry or cast down according to her nature? "Angry, indeed!" says Juno, gathering up her purple robes and Royal raiment. "Sorry, indeed!" cries Minerva, lacing on her corslet again, and scowling under her helmet. (I imagine the well-known Apple case has just been argued and decided.) "Hurt, forsooth! Do you suppose *we* care for the opinion of that hobnailed lout of a Paris? Do you suppose that I, the Goddess of Wisdom, can't make allowances for mortal ignorance, and am so base as to bear malice against a poor creature who knows no better? You little know the goddess nature when you dare to insinuate that our divine minds are actuated by motives so base. A love of justice influences *us*. We are above mean revenge. We are too magnanimous to be angry at the award of such a judge in favour of such a creature." And rustling out their skirts, the ladies walk away together. This is all very well. You are bound to believe them. They are actuated by no hostility: not they. They bear no malice —of course not. But when the Trojan war occurs presently, which side will they take? Many brave souls will be sent to Hades. Hector will perish. Poor old Priam's bald numskull will be cracked,

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and Troy town will burn, because Paris prefers golden-haired Venus to ox-eyed Juno and grey-eyed Minerva.

The last Essay of this Roundabout Series, describing the griefs and miseries of the editorial chair, was written, as the kind reader will acknowledge, in a mild and gentle, not in a warlike or satirical spirit. I showed how cudgels were applied; but, surely, the meek object of persecution hit no blows in return. The beating did not hurt much, and the person assaulted could afford to keep his good-humour; indeed, I admired that brave though illogical little actress, of the T. R. D–bl–n, for her fiery vindication of her profession's honour. I assure her I had no intention to tell l—s—well, let us say, monosyllables—about my superiors: and I wish her nothing but well, and when Macmahon (or shall it be Mulligan?) *Roi d'Irlande* ascends his throne, I hope she may be appointed Professor of English to the princesses of the Royal house. *Nuper*—in former days—I too have militated; sometimes, as I now think, unjustly; but always, I vow, without personal rancour. Which of us has not idle words to recall, flippant jokes to regret? Have you never committed an imprudence? Have you never had a dispute, and found out that you were wrong? So much the worse for you. Woe be to the man *qui croit toujours avoir raison.* His anger is not a brief madness, but a permanent mania. His rage is not a fever-fit, but a black poison inflaming him, distorting his judgment, disturbing his rest, embittering his cup, gnawing at his pleasures, causing him more cruel suffering than ever he can inflict on his enemy. *O la belle morale!* As I write it, I think about one or two little affairs of my own. There is old Dr. Squaretoso (he certainly was very rude to me, and that's the fact); there is Madame Pomposa (and certainly her ladyship's behaviour was about as cool as cool could be). Never mind, old Squaretoso: never mind, Madame Pomposa! Here is a hand. Let us be friends, as we once were, and have no more of this rancour.

I had hardly sent that last Roundabout Paper to the printer (which, I submit, was written in a pacable and not unchristian frame of mind), when Saturday came, and with it, of course, my *Saturday Review.* I remember at New York coming down to breakfast at the hotel one morning, after a criticism had appeared in the *New York Herald*, in which an Irish writer had given me a dressing for a certain lecture on Swift. Ah! my dear little enemy of the T. R. D., what were the cudgels in *your* little *billet-doux* compared with those noble New York shillelaghs? All through the Union, the literary sons of Erin have marched *alpeen-stock* in hand, and in every city of the States they call each other and everybody else the finest names. Having come to breakfast,

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then, in the public room, I sit down, and see—that the nine people opposite have all got *New York Heralds* in their hands. One dear little lady, whom I knew, and who sat opposite, gave a pretty blush, and popped her paper under the tablecloth. I told her I had had my whipping already in my own private room, and begged her to continue her reading. I may have undergone agonies, you see; but every man who has been bred at an English public school comes away from a private interview with Doctor Birch with a calm, even a smiling face. And this is not impossible, when you are prepared. You screw your courage up—you go through the business. You come back and take your seat on the form, showing not the least symptom of uneasiness or of previous unpleasantries. But to be caught suddenly up, and whipped in the bosom of your family—to sit down to breakfast, and cast your innocent eye on a paper, and find, before you are aware, that the *Saturday Monitor* or *Black Monday Instructor* has hoisted you and is laying on—that is indeed a trial. Or perhaps the family has looked at the dreadful paper beforehand, and weakly tries to hide it. "Where is the *Instructor*, or the *Monitor?*" say you. "Where is that paper?" says mamma to one of the young ladies. Lucy hasn't it. Fanny hasn't seen it. Emily thinks that the governess has it. At last, out it is brought, that awful paper! Papa is amazingly tickled with the article on Thomson; thinks that show-up of Johnson is very lively; and now—Heaven be good to us!—he has come to the critique on himself:—"Of all the rubbish which we have had from Mr. Tomkins, we do protest and vow that this last cartload is" &c. Ah! poor Tomkins!—but most of all, ah! poor Mrs. Tomkins, and poor Emily, and Fanny, and Lucy, who have to sit by and see *paterfamilias* put to the torture!

Now, on this eventful Saturday, I did not cry, because it was not so much the Editor as the Publisher of the *Cornhill Magazine* who was brought out for a dressing; and it is wonderful how gallantly one bears the misfortunes of one's friends. That a writer should be taken to task about his books is fair, and he must abide the praise or the censure. But that a publisher should be criticised for his dinners, and for the conversation which did *not* take place there,—is this tolerable press practice, legitimate joking, or honourable warfare? I have not the honour to know my next-door neighbour, but I make no doubt that he receives his friends at dinner; I see his wife and children pass constantly; I even know the carriages of some of the people who call upon him, and could tell their names. Now, suppose his servants were to tell mine what the doings are next door, who comes to dinner, what is eaten and said, and I were to publish an account of these transactions in

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a newspaper, I could assuredly get money for the report; but ought I to write it, and what would you think of me for doing so?

And suppose, Mr. Saturday Reviewer—you *censor morum*, you who pique yourself (and justly and honourably in the main) upon your character of gentleman, as well as of writer,—suppose, not that you yourself invent and indite absurd twaddle about gentlemen's private meetings and transactions, but pick this wretched garbage out of a New York sheet, and hold it up for your readers' amusement—don't you think, my friend, that you might have been better employed? Here, in my *Saturday Review*, and in an American paper subsequently sent to me, I light, astonished, on an account of the dinners of my friend and publisher, which are described as "tremendously heavy," of the conversation (which does not take place), and of the guests assembled at the table. I am informed that the proprietor of the *Cornhill*, and the host on these occasions, is "a very good man, but totally unread;" and that on my asking him whether Doctor Johnson was dining behind the screen, he said, "God bless my soul, my dear sir, there's no person by the name of Johnson here, nor any one behind the screen," and that a roar of laughter cut him short. I am informed by the same New York correspondent that I have touched up a contributor's article; that I once said to a literary gentleman, who was proudly pointing to an anonymous article as his writing, "Ah! I thought I recognised *your hoof* in it." I am told by the same authority that the *Cornhill Magazine* "shows symptoms of being on the wane," and having sold nearly a hundred thousand copies, he (the correspondent) "should think forty thousand was now about the mark." Then the graceful writer passes on to the dinners, at which it appears the Editor of the Magazine "is the great gun, and comes out with all the geniality in his power."

Now suppose this charming intelligence is untrue? Suppose the publisher (to recall the words of my friend the Dublin actor of last month) is a gentleman to the full as well informed as those whom he invites to his table? Suppose he never made the remark, beginning "God bless my soul, my dear sir," &c., nor anything resembling it? Suppose nobody roared with laughing? Suppose the Editor of the *Cornhill Magazine* never "touched up" one single line of the contribution which bears "marks of his hand"? Suppose he never said to any literary gentleman, "I recognised *your hoof*" in any periodical whatever? Suppose the forty thousand subscribers, which the writer to New York "considered to be about the mark," should be between ninety thousand and a hundred thousand (and as he will have figures, there they are)? Suppose this back-door gossip should be utterly blundering and untrue,

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would any one wonder? Ah! if we had only enjoyed the happiness to number this writer among the contributors to our Magazine, what a cheerfulness and easy confidence his presence would impart to our meetings! He would find that "poor Mr. Smith" had heard that recondite anecdote of Doctor Johnson behind the screen; and as for "the great gun of those banquets," with what geniality should not I "come out" if I had an amiable companion close by me, dotting down my conversation for the *New York Times!*

Attack our books, Mr. Correspondent, and welcome. They are fair subjects for just censure or praise. But woe be to you, if you allow private rancours or animosities to influence you in the discharge of your public duty! In the little court where you are paid to sit as judge, as critic, you owe it to your employers, to your conscience, to the honour of your calling, to deliver just sentences; and you shall have to answer to Heaven for your dealings, as surely as my Lord Chief Justice on the Bench. The dignity of letters, the honour of the literary calling, the slights put by haughty and unthinking people upon literary men,—don't we hear outcries upon these subjects raised daily? As dear Sam Johnson sits behind the screen, too proud to show his threadbare coat and patches among the more prosperous brethren of his trade, there is no want of dignity in *him*, in that homely image of labour ill-rewarded, genius as yet unrecognised, independence sturdy and uncomplaining. But Mr. Nameless, behind the publisher's screen uninvited, peering at the company and the meal, catching up scraps of the jokes, and noting down the guests' behaviour and conversation—what a figure his is! *Allons*, Mr. Nameless! Put up your notebook; walk out of the hall; and leave gentlemen alone who would be private, and wish you no harm.

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UNRECOGNISED GENIUS

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TUNBRIDGE TOYS

I WONDER whether those little silver pencil-cases with a movable almanack at the butt-end are still favourite implements with boys, and whether pedlars still hawk them about the country? Are there pedlars and hawkers still, or are rustics and children grown too sharp to deal with them? Those pencil-cases, as far as my memory serves me, were not of much use. The screw, upon which the movable almanack turned, was constantly getting loose. The 1 of the table would work from its moorings, under Tuesday or Wednesday, as the case might be, and you would find, on examination, that Th. or W. was the 23½ of the month (which was absurd on the face of the thing), and in a word your cherished pencil-case an utterly unreliable time-keeper. Nor was this a matter of wonder. Consider the position of a pencil-case in a boy's pocket. You had hardbake in it; marbles, kept in your purse when the money was all gone; your mother's purse, knitted so fondly and supplied with a little bit of gold, long since—prodigal little son!—scattered amongst the swine—I mean amongst brandy-balls, open tarts, three-cornered puffs, and similar abominations. You had a top and string; a knife; a piece of cobbler's wax; two or three bullets; a "Little Warbler"; and I, for my part, remember, for a considerable period, a brass-barrelled pocket-pistol (which would fire beautifully, for with it I shot off a button from Butt Major's jacket);—with all these things, and ever so many more, clinking and rattling in your pockets, and your hands, of course, keeping them in perpetual movement, how could you expect your movable almanack not to be twisted out of its place now and again—your pencil-case to be bent—your liquorice water not to leak out of your bottle over the cobbler's wax, your bull's-eyes not to ram up the lock and barrel of your pistol, and so forth?

In the month of June, thirty-seven years ago, I bought one of those pencil-cases from a boy whom I shall call Hawker, and who was in my form. Is he dead? Is he a millionaire? Is he a bankrupt now? He was an immense screw at school, and I believe to this day that the value of the thing for which I

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owed and eventually paid three-and-sixpence, was in reality not one-and-nine.

I certainly enjoyed the case at first a good deal, and amused myself with twiddling round the movable calendar. But this pleasure wore off. The jewel, as I said, was not paid for, and Hawker, a large and violent boy, was exceedingly unpleasant as a creditor. His constant remark was, "When are you going to pay me that three-and-sixpence? What sneaks your relations must be! They come to see you. You go out to them on Saturdays and Sundays, and they never give you anything! Don't tell *me*, you little humbug!" and so forth. The truth is that my relations were respectable; but my parents were making a tour in Scotland; and my friends in London, whom I used to go and see, were most kind to me, certainly, but somehow never tipped me. That term, of May to August 1823, passed in agonies, then, in consequence of my debt to Hawker. What was the pleasure of a calendar pencil-case in comparison with the doubt and torture of mind occasioned by the sense of the debt, and the constant reproach in that fellow's scowling eyes and gloomy coarse reminders? How was I to pay off such a debt out of sixpence a week? ludicrous! Why did not some one come to see me, and tip me? Ah! my dear sir, if you have any little friends at school, go and see them, and do the natural thing by them. You won't miss the sovereign. You don't know what a blessing it will be to them. Don't fancy they are too old—try 'em. And they will remember you, and bless you in future days; and their gratitude shall accompany your dreary after life; and they shall meet you kindly when thanks for kindness are scant. Oh mercy! shall I ever forget that sovereign you gave me, Captain Bob? or the agonies of being in debt to Hawker? In that very term, a relation of mine was going to India. I actually was fetched from school in order to take leave of him. I am afraid I told Hawker of this circumstance. I own I speculated upon my friend's giving me a pound. A pound? Pooh! A relation going to India, and deeply affected at parting from his darling kinsman, might give five pounds to the dear fellow! . . . There was Hawker when I came back—of course there he was. As he looked in my scared face, his turned livid with rage. He muttered curses, terrible from the lips of so young a boy. My relation, about to cross the ocean to fill a lucrative appointment, asked me with much interest about my progress at school, heard me construe a passage of Eutropius, the pleasing Latin work on which I was then engaged; gave me a God bless you, and sent me back to school; upon my word of honour, without so much as a half-crown! It is all very well, my

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dear sir, to say that boys contract habits of expecting tips from their parents' friends, that they become avaricious, and so forth. Avaricious! fudge! Boys contract habits of tart and toffee-eating, which they do not carry into after life. On the contrary, I wish I *did* like 'em. What raptures of pleasure one could have now for five shillings, if one could but pick it off the pastry-cook's tray! No. If you have any little friends at school, out with your half-crowns, my friend, and impart to those little ones the little fleeting joys of their age.

Well, then. At the beginning of August 1823, Bartlemytide holidays came, and I was to go to my parents, who were at Tunbridge Wells. My place in the coach was taken by my tutor's servants—"Bolt-in-Tun," Fleet Street, seven o'clock in the morning, was the word. My Tutor, the Reverend Edward P——, to whom I hereby present my best compliments, had a parting interview with me: gave me my little account for my governor: the remaining part of the coach-hire; five shillings for my own expenses; and some five-and-twenty shillings on an old account which had been overpaid, and was to be restored to my family.

Away I ran and paid Hawker his three-and-six. Ouf! what a weight it was off my mind! (He was a Norfolk boy, and used to go home from Mrs. Nelson's "Bell Inn," Aldgate—but that is not to the point.) The next morning, of course, we were an hour before the time. I and another boy shared a hackney-coach, two-and-six; porter for putting luggage on coach, threepence. I had no more money of my own left. Rasherwell, my companion, went into the "Bolt-in-Tun" coffee-room, and had a good breakfast. I couldn't: because, though I had five-and-twenty shillings of my parents' money, I had none of my own, you see.

I certainly intended to go without breakfast, and still remember how strongly I had that resolution in my mind. But there was that hour to wait. A beautiful August morning—I am very hungry. There is Rasherwell "tucking" away in the coffee-room. I pace the street, as sadly almost as if I had been coming to school, not going thence. I turn into a court by mere chance—I vow it was by mere chance—and there I see a coffee-shop with a placard in the window, "Coffee, Twopence. Round of buttered toast, Twopence." And here am I, hungry, penniless, with five-and-twenty shillings of my parents' money in my pocket.

What would you have done? You see I had had my money, and spent it in that pencil-case affair. The five-and-twenty shillings were a trust—by me to be handed over.

But then would my parents wish their only child to be actually without breakfast? Having this money, and being so hungry, so

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very hungry, mightn't I take ever so little? Mightn't I at home eat as much as I chose?

Well, I went into the coffee-shop, and spent fourpence. I remember the taste of the coffee and toast to this day—a peculiar, muddy, not-sweet-enough, most fragrant coffee—a rich, rancid, yet not-buttered-enough, delicious toast. The waiter had nothing. At any rate, fourpence, I know, was the sum I spent. And the hunger appeased, I got on the coach a guilty being.

At the last stage,—what is its name? I have forgotten in seven-and-thirty years,—there is an inn with a little green and trees before it; and by the trees there is an open carriage. It is our carriage. Yes, there are Prince and Blucher, the horses; and my parents in the carriage. Oh! how I had been counting the days until this one came! Oh! how happy had I been to see them yesterday! But there was that fourpence. All the journey down the toast had choked me, and the coffee poisoned me.

I was in such a state of remorse about the fourpence, that I forgot the maternal joy and caresses, the tender paternal voice. I pull out the twenty-four shillings and eightpence with a trembling hand.

"Here's your money," I gasp out, "which Mr. P—— owes you, all but fourpence. I owed three-and-sixpence to Hawker out of my money for a pencil-case, and I had none left, and I took fourpence of yours, and had some coffee at a shop."

I suppose I must have been choking whilst uttering this confession.

"My dear boy," says the governor, "why didn't you go and breakfast at the hotel?"

"He must be starved," says my mother.

I had confessed; I had been a prodigal; I had been taken back to my parents' arms again. It was not a very great crime as yet, or a very long career of prodigality; but don't we know that a boy who takes a pin which is not his own, will take a thousand pounds when occasion serves, bring his parents' grey heads with sorrow to the grave, and carry his own to the gallows? Witness the career of Dick Idle, upon whom our friend Mr. Sala has been discoursing. Dick only began by playing pitch-and-toss on a tombstone: playing fair, for what we know: and even for that sin he was promptly caned by the beadle. The bamboo was ineffectual to cane that reprobate's bad courses out of him. From pitch-and-toss he proceeded to manslaughter if necessary: to highway robbery; to Tyburn and the rope there. Ah! Heaven be thanked, my parents' heads are still above the grass, and mine still out of the noose.

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A RIDING LESSON

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As I look up from my desk, I see Tunbridge Wells Common and the rocks, the strange familiar place which I remember forty years ago. Boys saunter over the green with stumps and cricket-bats. Other boys gallop by on the riding-master's hacks. I protest it is "Cramp, Riding Master," as it used to be in the reign of George IV., and that Centaur Cramp must be at least a hundred years old. Yonder comes a footman with a bundle of novels from the library. Are they as good as *our* novels? Oh! how delightful they were! Shades of Valancour, awful ghost of Manfroni, how I shudder at your appearance! Sweet image of Thaddeus of Warsaw, how often has this almost infantile hand tried to depict you in a Polish cap and richly embroidered tights! And as for Corinthian Tom in light blue pantaloons and hessians, and Jerry Hawthorn from the country, can all the fashion, can all the splendour of real life which these eyes have subsequently beheld, can all the wit I have heard or read in later times, compare with your fashion, with your brilliancy, with your delightful grace, and sparkling vivacious rattle?

Who knows? They *may* have kept those very books at the library still—at the well-remembered library on the Pantiles, where they sell that delightful, useful Tunbridge ware. I will go and see. I wend my way to the Pantiles, the queer little old-world Pantiles, where, a hundred years since, so much good company came to take its pleasure. Is it possible, that in the past century, gentlefolks of the first rank (as I read lately in a lecture on George II. in the *Cornhill Magazine*) assembled here and entertained each other with gaming, dancing, fiddling, and tea? There are fiddlers, harpers, and trumpeters performing at this moment in a weak little old balcony, but where is the fine company? Where are the earls, duchesses, bishops, and magnificent embroidered gamesters? A half-dozen of children and their nurses are listening to the musicians; an old lady or two in a poke bonnet passes; and for the rest, I see but an uninteresting population of native tradesmen. As for the library, its window is full of pictures of burly theologians, and their works, sermons, apologues, and so forth. Can I go in and ask the young ladies at the counter for "Manfroni, or the One-handed Monk," and "Life in London, or the Adventures of Corinthian Tom, Jeremiah Hawthorn, Esquire, and their friend Bob Logic"?—absurd. I turn away abashed from the casement—from the Pantiles—no longer Pantiles, but Parade. I stroll over the Common and survey the beautiful purple hills around, twinkling with a thousand bright villas, which have sprung up over this charming ground since first I saw it. What an admirable scene of peace and plenty. What a delicious air breathes over the heath,

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blows the cloud-shadows across it, and murmurs through the full-clad trees! Can the world show a land fairer, richer, more cheerful? I see a portion of it when I look up from the window at which I write. But fair scene, green woods, bright terraces gleaming in sunshine, and purple clouds swollen with summer rain—nay, the very pages over which my head bends—disappear from before my eyes. They are looking backwards, back into forty years off, into a dark room, into a little house hard by on the Common here, in the Bartlemytide holidays. The parents have gone to town for two days: the house is all his own, his own and a grim old maid-servant's, and a little boy is seated at night in the lonely drawing-room, poring over "Manfroni, or the One-handed Monk," so frightened that he scarcely dares to turn round.

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DE JUVENTUTE

OUR last paper of this veracious and roundabout series related to a period which can only be historical to a great number of readers of this Magazine.* Four I saw at the station to-day with orange-covered books in their hands, who can but have known George IV. by books, and statues, and pictures. Elderly gentlemen were in their prime, old men in their middle age, when he reigned over us. His image remains on coins; on a picture or two hanging here and there in a Club or old-fashioned dining-room; on horseback, as at Trafalgar Square, for example, where I defy any monarch to look more uncomfortable. He turns up in sundry memoirs and histories which have been published of late days; in Mr. Massey's "History"; in the "Buckingham and Grenville Correspondence"; and gentlemen who have accused a certain writer of disloyalty are referred to those volumes to see whether the picture drawn of George is overcharged. Charon has paddled him off; he has mingled with the crowded republic of the dead. His effigy smiles from a canvas or two. Breechless he bestrides his steed in Trafalgar Square. I believe he still wears his robes at Madame Tussaud's (Madame herself having quitted Baker Street and life, and found him she modelled t'other side the Stygian stream). On the head of a five-shilling piece we still occasionally come upon him, with Saint George, the dragon-slayer, on the other side of the coin. Ah me! did this George slay many dragons? Was he a brave, heroic champion, and rescuer of virgins? Well! well! have you and I overcome all the dragons that assail *us?* come alive and victorious out of all the caverns which we have entered in life, and succoured, at risk of life and limb, all poor distressed persons in whose naked limbs the dragon Poverty is about to fasten his fangs, whom the dragon Crime is poisoning with his horrible breath, and about to crunch up and devour? O my Royal liege! O my gracious prince and warrior! *You* a champion to fight that monster? Your feeble spear ever pierce that slimy paunch or plated back? See how the flames come gurgling out of his red-hot brazen throat! What a roar!

* The *Cornhill Magazine.*

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Nearer and nearer he trails, with eyes flaming like the lamps of a railroad engine. How he squeals, rushing out through the darkness of his tunnel! Now he is near. Now he is *here*. And now—what?—lance, shield, knight, feathers, horse and all? O horror, horror! Next day, round the monster's cave, there lie a few bones more. You, who wish to keep yours in your skins, be thankful that you are not called upon to go out and fight dragons. Be grateful that they don't sally out and swallow you. Keep a wise distance from their caves, lest you pay too dearly for approaching them. Remember that years passed, and whole districts were ravaged, before the warrior came who was able to cope with the devouring monster. When that knight *does* make his appearance, with all my heart let us go out and welcome him with our best songs, huzzas, and laurel wreaths, and eagerly recognise his valour and victory. But he comes only seldom. Countless knights were slain before Saint George won the battle. In the battle of life are we all going to try for the honours of championship? If we can do our duty, if we can keep our place pretty honourably through the combat, let us say, *Laus Deo!* at the end of it, as the firing ceases, and the night falls over the field.

The old were middle-aged, the elderly were in their prime, then, thirty years since, when yon Royal George was still fighting the dragon. As for you, my pretty lass, with your saucy hat and golden tresses tumbled in your net, and you, my spruce young gentleman in your mandarin's cap (the young folks at the country-place where I am staying are so attired), your parents were unknown to each other, and wore short frocks and short jackets, at the date of this five-shilling piece. Only to-day I met a dog-cart crammed with children—children with moustaches and mandarin caps—children with saucy hats and hair-nets—children in short frocks and knickerbockers (surely the prettiest boy's dress that has appeared these hundred years)—children from twenty years of age to six; and father, with mother by his side, driving in front—and on father's countenance I saw that very laugh which I remember perfectly in the time when this crown-piece was coined—in *his* time, in King George's time, when we were schoolboys seated on the same form. The smile was just as broad, as bright, as jolly, as I remember it in the past—unforgotten, though not seen or thought of, for how many decades of years, and quite and instantly familiar, though so long out of sight.

Any contemporary of that coin who takes it up and reads the inscription round the laurelled head, "Georgius IV. Britanniarum Rex Fid. Def. 1823," if he will but look steadily enough at the round, and utter the proper incantation, I daresay may conjure

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back his life there. Look well, my elderly friend, and tell me what you see. First, I see a Sultan, with hair, beautiful hair, and a crown of laurels round his head, and his name is Georgius Rex Fid. Def., and so on. Now the Sultan has disappeared; and what is that I see? A boy,—a boy in a jacket. He is at a desk; he has great books before him, Latin and Greek books and dictionaries. Yes, but behind the great books, which he pretends to read, is a little one, with pictures, which he is really reading. It is—yes, I can read now—it is the "Heart of Midlothian," by the author of "Waverley"—or, no, it is "Life in London, or the Adventures of Corinthian Tom, Jeremiah Hawthorn, and their friend Bob Logic," by Pierce Egan; and it has pictures—oh! such funny pictures! As he reads, there comes behind the boy, a man, a dervish, in a black gown, like a woman, and a black square cap, and he has a book in each hand, and he seizes the boy who is reading the picture-book, and lays his head upon one of his books, and smacks it with the other. The boy makes faces, and so that picture disappears.

Now the boy has grown bigger. *He* has got on a black gown and cap, something like the dervish's. He is at a table, with ever so many bottles on it, and fruit, and tobacco; and other young dervishes come in. They seem as if they were singing. To them enters an old moollah, he takes down their names, and orders them all to go to bed. What is this? a carriage, with four beautiful horses all galloping—a man in red is blowing a trumpet. Many young men are on the carriage—one of them is driving the horses. Surely they won't drive into that—— Ah! they have all disappeared. And now I see one of the young men alone. He is walking in a street—a dark street; presently a light comes to a window. There is the shadow of a lady who passes. He stands there till the light goes out. Now he is in a room scribbling on a piece of paper, and kissing a miniature every now and then. They seem to be lines each pretty much of a length. I can read *heart, smart, dart; Mary, fairy; Cupid, stupid; true, you;* and never mind what more. Bah! it is bosh. Now see, he has got a gown on again, and a wig of white hair on his head, and he is sitting with other dervishes in a great room full of them, and on a throne in the middle is an old Sultan in scarlet, sitting before a desk, and he wears a wig too—and the young man gets up and speaks to him. And now what is here? He is in a room with ever so many children, and the miniature hanging up. Can it be a likeness of *that* woman who is sitting before that copper urn, with a silver vase in her hand, from which she is pouring hot liquor into cups? *Was she* ever a fairy? She is as fat as a hippopotamus now. He *is sitting* on a divan by the fire. He has a paper on his knees.

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Read the name of the paper. It is the *Superfine Review*. It inclines to think that Mr. Dickens is not a true gentleman, that Mr. Thackeray is not a true gentleman, and that when the one is pert and the other is arch, we, the gentlemen of the *Superfine Review*, think, and think rightly, that we have some cause to be indignant. The great cause why modern humour and modern sentimentalism repel us, is that they are unwarrantably familiar. Now, Mr. Sterne, the Superfine Reviewer thinks, "was a true sentimentalist, because he was *above all things* a true gentleman." The flattering inference is obvious: let us be thankful for having an elegant moralist watching over us, and learn, if not too old, to imitate his high-bred politeness and catch his unobtrusive grace. If we are unwarrantably familiar, we know who is not. If we repel by pertness, we know who never does. If our language offends, we know whose is always modest. O pity! The vision has disappeared off the silver, the images of youth and the past are vanishing away! We who have lived before railways were made, belong to another world. In how many hours could the Prince of Wales drive from Brighton to London, with a light carriage built expressly, and relays of horses longing to gallop the next stage? Do you remember Sir Somebody, the coachman of the Age, who took our half-crown so affably? It was only yesterday; but what a gulf between now and then! *Then* was the old world. Stage-coaches, more or less swift, riding-horses, pack-horses, highwaymen, knights in armour, Norman invaders, Roman legions, Druids, Ancient Britons painted blue, and so forth—all these belong to the old period. I will concede a halt in the midst of it, and allow that gunpowder and printing tended to modernise the world. But your railroad starts the new era, and we of a certain age belong to the new time and the old one. We are of the time of chivalry as well as the Black Prince of Sir Walter Manny. We are of the age of steam. We have stepped out of the old world on to "Brunel's" vast deck, and across the waters *ingens patet tellus*. Towards what new continent are we wending? to what new laws, new manners, new politics, vast new expanses of liberties unknown as yet, or only surmised? I used to know a man who had invented a flying-machine. "Sir," he would say, "give me but five hundred pounds, and I will make it. It is so simple of construction that I tremble daily lest some other person should light upon and patent my discovery." Perhaps faith was wanting; perhaps the five hundred pounds. He is dead, and somebody else must make the flying-machine. But that will only be a step forward on the journey already begun since we quitted the old world. There it lies on the other side of yonder embankments. You young folk have never seen it; and Waterloo is to you no more than Agincourt, and George IV.

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than Sardanapalus. We elderly people have lived in that præ-railroad world, which has passed into limbo and vanished from under us. I tell you it was firm under our feet once, and not long ago. They have raised those railroad embankments up, and shut off the old world that was behind them. Climb up that bank on which the irons are laid, and look to the other side—it is gone. There *is* no other side. Try and catch yesterday. Where is it? Here is a *Times* newspaper, dated Monday 26th, and this is Tuesday 27th. Suppose you deny there was such a day as yesterday!

We who lived before railways, and survive out of the ancient world, are like Father Noah and his family out of the Ark. The children will gather round and say to us patriarchs, "Tell us, grandpapa, about the old world." And we shall mumble our old stories; and we shall drop off one by one; and there will be fewer and fewer of us, and these very old and feeble. There will be but ten præ-railroadites left: then three—then two—then one—then 0! If the hippopotamus had the least sensibility (of which I cannot trace any signs either in his hide or his face), I think he would go down to the bottom of his tank, and never come up again. Does he not see that he belongs to bygone ages, and that his great hulking barrel of a body is out of place in these times? What has he in common with the brisk young life surrounding him? In the watches of the night, when the keepers are asleep, when the birds are on one leg, when even the little armadillo is quiet, and the monkeys have ceased their chatter,—he, I mean the hippopotamus, and the elephant, and the long-necked giraffe, perhaps may lay their heads together and have a colloquy about the great silent antediluvian world which they remember, where mighty monsters floundered through the ooze, crocodiles basked on the banks, and dragons darted out of the caves and waters before men were made to slay them. We who lived before railways are antediluvians—we must pass away. We are growing scarcer every day; and old—old—very old relicts of the times when George was still fighting the Dragon.

Not long since, a company of horse-riders paid a visit to our watering-place. We went to see them, and I bethought me that young Walter Juvenis, who was in the place, might like also to witness the performance. A pantomime is not always amusing to persons who have attained a certain age; but a boy at a pantomime is always amused and amusing, and to see his pleasure is good for most hypochondriacs.

We sent to Walter's mother, requesting that he might join us, and the kind lady replied that the boy had already been at the morning performance of the equestrians, but was most eager to go in the evening likewise. And go he did, and laughed at all Mr.

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Merryman's remarks, though he remembered them with remarkable accuracy, and insisted upon waiting to the very end of the fun, and was only induced to retire just before its conclusion by representations that the ladies of the party would be incommoded if they were to wait and undergo the rush and trample of the crowd round about. When this fact was pointed out to him, he yielded at once, though with a heavy heart, his eyes looking longingly towards the ring as we retreated out of the booth. We were scarcely clear of the place, when we heard "God Save the Queen," played by the equestrian band, the signal that all was over. Our companion entertained us with scraps of the dialogue on our way home—precious crumbs of wit which he had brought away from that feast. He laughed over them again as we walked under the stars. He has them now, and takes them out of the pocket of his memory, and crunches a bit, and relishes it with a sentimental tenderness, too, for he is, no doubt, back at school by this time; the holidays are over; and Doctor Birch's young friends have reassembled.

Queer jokes, which caused a thousand simple mouths to grin! As the jaded Merryman uttered them to the old gentleman with the whip, some of the old folks in the audience, I daresay, indulged in reflections of their own. There was one joke—I utterly forget it—but it began with Merryman saying what he had for dinner. He had mutton for dinner, at one o'clock, after which "he had to *come to business.*" And then came the point. Walter Juvenis, Esquire, Reverend Doctor Birch's, Market Rodborough, if you read this, will you please send me a line, and let me know what was the joke Mr. Merryman made about having his dinner? *You* remember well enough. But do I want to know? Suppose a boy takes a favourite long-cherished lump of cake out of his pocket, and offers you a bite? *Merci!* The fact is, I *don't* care much about knowing that joke of Mr. Merryman's.

But whilst he was talking about his dinner, and his mutton, and his landlord, and his business, I felt a great interest about Mr. M. in private life—about his wife, lodgings, earnings, and general history, and I daresay was forming a picture of those in my mind:—wife cooking the mutton; children waiting for it; Merryman in his plain clothes, and so forth; during which contemplation the joke was uttered and laughed at, and Mr. M., resuming his professional duties, was tumbling over head and heels. Do not suppose I am going, *sicut est mos*, to indulge in moralities about buffoons, paint, motley, and mountebanking. Nay, Prime Ministers rehearse their jokes; Opposition leaders prepare and polish them; Tabernacle preachers must arrange them in their minds before they utter them. All I mean is, that I would like

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to know any one of these performers thoroughly, and out of his uniform: that preacher, and why in his travels this and that point struck him; wherein lies his power of pathos, humour, eloquence; —that Minister of State, and what moves him, and how his private heart is working;—I would only say that, at a certain time of life, certain things cease to interest: but about *some* things when we cease to care, what will be the use of life, sight, hearing? Poems are written, and we cease to admire. Lady Jones invites us, and we yawn; she ceases to invite us, and we are resigned. The last time I saw a ballet at the opera—oh! it is many years ago—I fell asleep in the stalls, wagging my head in insane dreams, and I hope affording amusement to the company, while the feet of five hundred nymphs were cutting flicflacs on the stage at a few paces' distance. Ah, I remember a different state of things! *Credite posteri.* To see those nymphs—gracious powers, how beautiful they were! That leering, painted, shrivelled, thin-armed, thick-ankled old thing cutting dreary capers, coming thumping down on her board out of time—*that* an opera-dancer? Pooh! My dear Walter, the great difference between *my* time and yours, who will enter life some two or three years hence, is that, now, the dancing women and singing women are ludicrously old, out of time, and out of tune; the paint is so visible, and the dinge and wrinkles of their wretched old cotton stockings, that I am surprised how anybody can like to look at them. And as for laughing at *me* for falling asleep, I can't understand a man of sense doing otherwise. In *my* time, *à la bonne heure.* In the reign of George IV., I give you my honour, all the dancers at the opera were as beautiful as Houris. Even in William IV.'s time, when I think of Duvernay prancing in as the Bayadère,—I say it was a vision of loveliness such as mortal eyes can't see nowadays. How well I remember the tune to which she used to appear! Kaled used to say to the Sultan, "My lord, a troop of those dancing and singing gurls called Bayadères approaches," and, to the clash of cymbals, and the thumping of my heart, in she used to dance! There has never been anything like it—never. There never will be—I laugh to scorn old people who tell me about your Noblet, your Montessu, your Vestris, your Parisot—pshaw, the senile twaddlers! And the impudence of the young men, with their music and their dancers of to-day! I tell you the women are dreary old creatures. I tell you one air in an opera is just like another, and they send all rational creatures to sleep. Ah, Ronzi de Begnis, thou lovely one! Ah, Caradori, thou smiling angel! Ah, Malibran! Nay, I will come to modern times, and acknowledge that Lablache was a very good singer thirty years ago (though Porto was the boy for me):

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and then we had Ambrogetti, and Curioni, and Donzelli, a rising young singer.

But what is most certain and lamentable is the decay of stage beauty since the days of George IV. Think of Sontag! I remember her in *Otello* and the *Donna del Lago* in '28. I remember being behind the scenes at the opera (where numbers of us young fellows of fashion used to go), and seeing Sontag let her hair fall down over her shoulders previous to her murder by Donzelli. Young fellows have never seen beauty like *that*, heard such a voice, seen such hair, such eyes. Don't tell *me!* A man who has been about town since the reign of George IV., ought he not to know better than you young lads who have seen nothing? The deterioration of women is lamentable; and the conceit of the young fellows more lamentable still, that they won't see this fact, but persist in thinking their time as good as ours.

Bless me! when I was a lad, the stage was covered with angels, who sang, acted, and danced. When I remember the Adelphi, and the actresses there: when I think of Miss Chester, and Miss Love, and Mrs. Serle at Sadler's Wells, and her forty glorious pupils—of the Opera and Noblet, and the exquisite young Taglioni, and Pauline Leroux, and a host more! One much-admired being of those days I confess I never cared for, and that was the chief *male* dancer—a very important personage then, with a bare neck, bare arms, a tunic, and a hat and feathers, who used to divide the applause with the ladies, and who has now sunk down a trap-door for ever. And this frank admission ought to show that I am not your mere twaddling *laudator temporis acti*—your old fogey who can see no good except in his own time.

They say that claret is better nowadays, and cookery much improved since the days of *my* monarch—of George IV. *Pastry cookery* is certainly not so good. I have often eaten half-a-crown's worth (including, I trust, ginger-beer) at our school pastrycook's, and that is a proof that the pastry must have been very good, for could I do as much now? I passed by the pastrycook's shop lately, having occasion to visit my old school. It looked a very dingy old baker's; misfortunes may have come over him—those penny tarts certainly did *not* look so nice as I remember them: but he may have grown careless as he has grown old (I should judge him to be now about ninety-six years of age), and his hand may have lost its cunning.

Not that we were not great epicures. I remember how we constantly grumbled at the quantity of the food in our master's house—which on my conscience I believe was excellent and plentiful—and how we tried once or twice to eat him out of house and

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home. At the pastrycook's we may have over-eaten ourselves (I have admitted half-a-crown's worth for my own part, but I don't like to mention the *real* figure for fear of perverting the present generation of boys by my monstrous confession)—we may have eaten too much, I say. We did; but what then? The school apothecary was sent for: a couple of small globules at night, a trifling preparation of senna in the morning, and we had not to go to school, so that the draught was an actual pleasure.

For our amusements, besides the games in vogue, which were pretty much in old times as they are now (except cricket, *par exemple*—and I wish the present youth joy of their bowling, and suppose Armstrong and Whitworth will bowl at them with light field-pieces next), there were novels—ah! I trouble you to find such novels in the present day! O Scottish Chiefs, didn't we weep over you! O Mysteries of Udolpho, didn't I and Briggs Minor draw pictures out of you, as I have said? Efforts, feeble indeed, but still giving pleasure to us and our friends. "I say, old boy, draw us Vivaldi tortured in the Inquisition," or "Draw us Don Quixote and the windmills, you know," amateurs would say, to boys who had a love of drawing. "Peregrine Pickle" we liked, our fathers admiring it, and telling us (the sly old boys) it was capital fun; but I think I was rather bewildered by it, though "Roderick Random" was and remains delightful. I don't remember having Sterne in the school library, no doubt because the works of that divine were not considered decent for young people. Ah! not against thy genius, O father of Uncle Toby and Trim, would I say a word in disrespect. But I am thankful to live in times when men no longer have the temptation to write so as to call blushes on women's cheeks, and would shame to whisper wicked allusions to honest boys. Then, above all, we had WALTER SCOTT, the kindly, the generous, the pure—the companion of what countless delightful hours; the purveyor of how much happiness; the friend whom we recall as the constant benefactor of our youth! How well I remember the type and the brownish paper of the old duodecimo "Tales of My Landlord!" I have never dared to read the "Pirate," and the "Bride of Lammermoor," or "Kenilworth," from that day to this, because the finale is unhappy, and people die, and are murdered at the end. But "Ivanhoe," and "Quentin Durward"! Oh for a half-holiday, and a quiet corner, and one of those books again! Those books, and perhaps those eyes with which we read them; and, it may be, the brains behind the eyes! It may be the tart was good; but how fresh the appetite was! If the gods would give me the desire of my heart, I should be able to write a story which boys would relish for the next few

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dozen of centuries. The boy-critic loves the story: grown up, he loves the author who wrote the story. Hence the kindly tie is established between writer and reader, and lasts pretty nearly for life. I meet people now who don't care for Walter Scott, or the "Arabian Nights"; I am sorry for them, unless they in their time have found *their* romancer—their charming Scheherazade. By the way, Walter, when you are writing, tell me who is the favourite novelist in the fourth form now? Have you got anything so good and kindly as dear Miss Edgeworth's "Frank"? It used to belong to a fellow's sisters generally; but though he pretended to despise it, and said, "Oh, stuff for girls!" he read it; and I think there were one or two passages which would try my eyes now, were I to meet with the little book.

As for Thomas and Jeremiah (it is only my witty way of calling Tom and Jerry), I went to the British Museum the other day on purpose to get it; but somehow, if you will press the question so closely, on reperusal, Tom and Jerry is not so brilliant as I had supposed it to be. The pictures are just as fine as ever; and I shook hands with broad-backed Jerry Hawthorn and Corinthian Tom with delight, after many years' absence. But the style of the writing, I own, was not pleasing to me; I even thought it a little vulgar—well! well! other writers have been considered vulgar—and, as a description of the sports and amusements of London in the ancient times, more curious than amusing.

But the pictures!—oh! the pictures are noble still! First, there is Jerry arriving from the country, in a green coat and leather gaiters, and being measured for a fashionable suit at Corinthian House, by Corinthian Tom's tailor. Then away for the career of pleasure and fashion. The park! delicious excitement! The theatre! the saloon!! the green-room!!! Rapturous bliss—the opera itself! and then perhaps to Temple Bar, to *knock down a Charley* there! There are Jerry and Tom, with their tights and little cocked hats, coming from the opera—very much as gentlemen in waiting on Royalty are habited now. There they are at Almack's itself, amidst a crowd of high-bred personages, with the Duke of Clarence himself looking at them dancing. Now, strange change, they are in Tom Cribb's parlour, where they don't seem to be a whit less at home than in fashion's gilded halls: and now they are at Newgate, seeing the irons knocked off the malefactors' legs previous to execution. What hardened ferocity in the countenance of the desperado in yellow breeches! What compunction in the face of the gentleman in black (who, I suppose, has been forging), and who clasps his hands, and listens to the chaplain! Now we haste away to merrier scenes: to

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Tattersall's (ah, gracious powers! what a funny fellow that actor was who performed Dicky Green in that scene at the play!); and now we are at a private party, at which Corinthian Tom is waltzing (and very gracefully, too, as you must confess) with Corinthian Kate, whilst Bob Logic, the Oxonian, is playing on the piano!

"After," the text says, "*the Oxonian* had played several pieces of lively music, he requested as a favour that Kate and his friend Tom would perform a waltz. Kate without any hesitation immediately stood up. Tom offered his hand to his fascinating partner, and the dance took place. The plate conveys a correct representation of the 'gay scene' at that precise moment. The anxiety of *the Oxonian* to witness the attitudes of the elegant pair had nearly

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put a stop to their movements. On turning round from the pianoforte and presenting his comical *mug*, Kate could scarcely suppress a laugh."

And no wonder; just look at it now (as I have copied it to the best of my humble ability), and compare Master Logic's countenance and attitude with the splendid elegance of Tom! Now every London man is weary and *blasé*. There is an enjoyment of life in these young bucks of 1823 which contrasts strangely with our feelings of 1860. Here, for instance, is a specimen of their talk and walk.

"'If,' says LOGIC—'if *enjoyment* is your *motto*, you may make the most of an evening at Vauxhall, more than at any other place in the metropolis. It is all free and easy. Stay as long as you like, and depart when you think proper.'—'Your description is so flattering,' replied JERRY, 'that I do not care how soon the time arrives for us to start.' LOGIC proposed a '*bit of a stroll*' in order to get rid of an hour or two, which was immediately accepted by Tom and Jerry. A *turn* or two in Bond Street, a *stroll* through Piccadilly, a *look in* at TATTERSALL'S, a *ramble* through Pall Mall, and a *strut* on the Corinthian path, fully occupied the time of our heroes until the hour for dinner arrived, when a few glasses of Tom's rich wines soon put them on the *qui vive*. VAUXHALL was then the object in view, and the TRIO started, bent upon enjoying the pleasures which this place so amply affords."

How nobly those inverted commas, those italics, those capitals, bring out the writer's wit and relieve the eye! They are as good as jokes, though you mayn't quite perceive the point. Mark the varieties of lounge in which the young men indulge—now *a stroll*, then *a look in*, then *a ramble*, and presently *a strut*. When George, Prince of Wales, was twenty, I have read in an old Magazine, "the Prince's lounge" was a peculiar manner of walking which the young bucks imitated. At Windsor George III. had *a cat's path*—a sly early walk which the good old King took in the grey morning before his household was astir. What was the Corinthian path here recorded? Does any antiquary know? And what were the rich wines which our friends took, and which enabled them to enjoy Vauxhall? Vauxhall is gone, but the wines which could occasion such a delightful perversion of the intellect as to enable it to enjoy ample pleasures there, what were they?

So the game of life proceeds, until Jerry Hawthorn, the rustic, is fairly knocked up by all this excitement and is forced to go home, and the last picture represents him getting into the coach at the

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"White Horse Cellar," he being one of six inside; whilst his friends shake him by the hand; whilst the sailor mounts on the roof; whilst the Jews hang round with oranges, knives, and sealing-wax; whilst the guard is closing the door. Where are they now, those sealing-wax vendors? where are the guards? where are the jolly teams? where are the coaches? and where the youth that climbed inside and out of them; that heard the merry horn which sounds no more; that saw the sun rise over Stonehenge; that rubbed away the bitter tears at night after parting as the coach sped on the journey to school and London; that looked out with beating heart as the milestones flew by, for the welcome corner where began home and holidays?

It is night now: and here is home. Gathered under the quiet roof elders and children lie alike at rest. In the midst of a great peace and calm, the stars look out from the heavens. The silence is peopled with the past; sorrowful remorses for sins and shortcomings—memories of passionate joys and griefs rise out of their graves, both now alike calm and sad. Eyes, as I shut mine, look at me, that have long ceased to shine. The town and the fair landscape sleep under the starlight, wreathed in the autumn mists. Twinkling among the houses a light keeps watch here and there, in what may be a sick chamber or two. The clock tolls sweetly in the silent air. Here is night and rest. An awful sense of thanks makes the heart swell, and the head bow, as I pass to my room through the sleeping house, and feel as though a hushed blessing were upon it.

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NOTES OF A WEEK'S HOLIDAY

MOST of us tell old stories in our families. The wife and children laugh for the hundredth time at the joke. The old servants (though old servants are fewer every day) nod and smile a recognition at the well-known anecdote. "Don't tell that story of Grouse in the gun-room," says Diggory to Mr. Hardcastle in the play, "or I must laugh." As we twaddle, and grow old and forgetful, we may tell an old story; or, out of mere benevolence, and a wish to amuse a friend when conversation is flagging, disinter a Joe Miller now and then; but the practice is not quite honest, and entails a certain necessity of hypocrisy on story hearers and tellers. It is a sad thing, to think that a man with what you call a fund of anecdote is a humbug, more or less amiable and pleasant. What right have I to tell my "Grouse in the gun-room" over and over in the presence of my wife, mother, mother-in-law, sons, daughters, old footman or parlour-maid, confidential clerk, curate, or what not? I smirk and go through the history, giving my admirable imitations of the characters introduced: I mimic Jones's grin, Hobbs's squint, Brown's stammer, Grady's brogue, Sandy's Scotch accent, to the best of my power: and the family part of my audience laughs good-humouredly. Perhaps the stranger, for whose amusement the performance is given, is amused by it, and laughs too. But this practice continued is not moral. This self-indulgence on your part, my dear Paterfamilias, is weak, vain—not to say culpable. I can imagine many a worthy man, who begins unguardedly to read this page, and comes to the present sentence, lying back in his chair, thinking of that story which he has told innocently for fifty years, and rather piteously owning to himself, "Well, well, it *is* wrong; I have no right to call on my poor wife to laugh, my daughters to affect to be amused, by that old old jest of mine. And they would have gone on laughing, and they would have pretended to be amused, to their dying day, if this man had not flung his damper over our hilarity." . . . I lay down the pen, and think, "Are there any old stories which I still tell myself in the bosom of my family? Have I any Grouse in my

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gun-room?" If there are such, it is because my memory fails; not because I want applause, and wantonly repeat myself. You see men with the so-called fund of anecdote will not repeat the same story to the same individual; but they do think that, on a new party, the repetition of a joke ever so old may be honourably tried. I meet men walking the London streets, bearing the best reputation, men of anecdotal powers:—I know such, who very likely will read this, and say, "Hang the fellow, he means *me!*" And so I do. No—no man ought to tell an anecdote more than thrice, let us say, unless he is sure he is speaking only to give pleasure to his hearers—unless he feels that it is not a mere desire for praise which makes him open his jaws.

And is it not with writers as with *raconteurs?* Ought they not to have their ingenuous modesty? May authors tell old stories, and how many times over? When I come to look at a place which I have visited any time these twenty or thirty years, I recall not the place merely, but the sensations I had at first seeing it, and which are quite different to my feelings to-day. That first day at Calais: the voices of the women crying out at night, as the vessel came alongside the pier; the supper at Quillacq's and the flavour of the cutlets and wine; the red-calico canopy under which I slept; the tiled floor, and the fresh smell of the sheets; the wonderful postillion in his jack-boots and pigtail;—all return with perfect clearness to my mind, and I am seeing them, and not the objects which are actually under my eyes. Here is Calais. Yonder is that commissioner I have known this score of years. Here are the women screaming and bustling over the baggage; the people at the passport-barrier who take your papers. My good people, I hardly see you. You no more interest me than a dozen orange-women in Covent Garden, or a shop book-keeper in Oxford Street. But you make me think of a time when you were indeed wonderful to behold—when the little French soldiers wore white cockades in their shakos—when the diligence was forty hours going to Paris; and the great-booted postillion, as surveyed by youthful eyes from the coupé, with his *jurons*, his ends of rope for the harness, and his clubbed pigtail, was a wonderful being, and productive of endless amusement. You young folks don't remember the apple girls who used to follow the diligence up the hill beyond Boulogne, and the delights of the jolly road? In making Continental journeys with young folk, an oldster may be very quiet, and, to outward appearance, melancholy; but really he has gone back to the days of his youth, and he is seventeen or eighteen years of age (as the case may be), and is amusing himself with all his might. He is noting the horses as they come squealing out of the post-house yard at mid-

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night; he is enjoying the delicious meals at Beauvais and Amiens, and quaffing *ad libitum* the rich table-d'hôte wine; he is hail-fellow with the conductor, and alive to all the incidents of the road. A man can be alive in 1860 and 1830 at the same time, don't you see? Bodily, I may be in 1860, inert, silent, torpid; but in the spirit I am walking about in 1828, let us say;—in a blue dress-coat and brass buttons, a sweet figured silk waistcoat (which I button round a slim waist with perfect ease), looking at beautiful beings with gigot sleeves and tea-tray hats under the golden chestnuts of the Tuileries, or round the Place Vendôme, where the *drapeau blanc* is floating from the statueless column. Shall we go and dine at "Bombarda's," near the "Hôtel Breteuil," or at the "Café Virginie"? — Away! "Bombarda's" and the "Hôtel Breteuil" have been pulled down ever so long. They knocked down the poor old Virginian Coffee-house last year. My spirit goes and dines there. My body, perhaps, is seated with ever so many people in a railway-carriage, and no wonder my companions find me dull and silent. Have you read Mr. Dale Owen's "Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World"?—(My dear sir, it will make your hair stand quite refreshingly on end.) In that work you will read that when gentlemen's or ladies' spirits travel off a few score or thousand miles to visit a friend, their bodies lie quiet and in a torpid state in their beds or in their arm-chairs at home. So in this way I am absent. My soul whisks away thirty years back into the past. I am looking out anxiously for a beard. I am getting past the age of loving Byron's poems, and pretend that I like Wordsworth and Shelley much better. Nothing I eat or drink (in reason) disagrees with me; and I know whom I think to be the most lovely creature in the world. Ah, dear maid (of that remote but well-remembered period), are you a wife or widow now?—are you dead?—are you thin and withered and old?—or are you grown much stouter, with a false front?—and so forth.

O Eliza, Eliza!—Stay, *was* she Eliza? Well, I protest I have forgotten what your Christian name was. You know I only met you for two days, but your sweet face is before me now, and the roses blooming on it are as fresh as in that time of May. Ah, dear Miss X——, my timid youth and ingenuous modesty would never have allowed me, even in my private thoughts, to address you otherwise than by your paternal name, but *that* (though I conceal it) I remember perfectly well, and that your dear and respected father was a brewer.

CARILLON.—I was awakened this morning with the chime which Antwerp cathedral clock plays at half-hours. The tune has

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been haunting me ever since, as tunes will. You dress, eat, drink, walk, and talk to yourself to their tune: their inaudible jingle accompanies you all day: you read the sentences of the paper to their rhythm. I tried uncouthly to imitate the tune to the ladies of the family at breakfast, and they say it is the Shadow Dance of "Dinorah." It may be so. I dimly remember that my body was once present during the performance of that opera, whilst my eyes were closed, and my intellectual faculties dormant at the back of the box; howbeit, I have learned that shadow dance from hearing it pealing up ever so high in the air, at night, morn, noon.

How pleasant to lie awake and listen *to* the cheery peal! whilst the old city is asleep at midnight, or waking up rosy at sunrise, or basking in noon, or swept by the scudding rain which drives in gusts over the broad places, and the great shining river; or sparkling in snow which dresses up a hundred thousand masts, peaks, and towers; or wrapt round with thunder-cloud canopies, before which the white gables shine whiter; day and night the kind little carillon plays its fantastic melodies overhead. The bells go on ringing. *Quot vivos vocant, mortuos plangunt, fulgura frangunt;* so on to the past and future tenses, and for how many nights, days, and years! Whilst the French were pitching their *fulgura* into Chassé's citadel, the bells went on ringing quite cheerfully. Whilst the scaffolds were up and guarded by Alva's soldiery, and regiments of penitents, blue, black, and grey, poured out of churches and convents, droning their dirges, and marching to the place of the Hôtel de Ville, where heretics and rebels were to meet their doom, the bells up yonder were chanting at their appointed half-hours and quarters, and rang the *mauvais quart d'heure* for many a poor soul. This bell can see as far away as the towers and dykes of Rotterdam. That one can call a greeting to St. Ursula's at Brussels, and toss a recognition to that one at the town-hall of Oudenarde, and remember how after a great struggle there a hundred and fifty years ago the whole plain was covered with the flying French cavalry—Burgundy, and Berri, and the Chevalier of St. George flying like the rest. "What is your clamour about Oudenarde?" says another bell (Bob Major *this* one must be). "Be still, thou querulous old clapper! *I* can see over to Hougoumont and Saint John. And about forty-five years since, I rang all through one Sunday in June, when there was such a battle going on in the cornfields there, as none of you others ever heard tolled of. Yes, from morning service until after vespers, the French and English were all at it, ding-dong." And then calls of business intervening, the bells have to give up their private jingle, resume their professional duty, and sing their hourly chorus out of "Dinorah."

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What a prodigious distance those bells can be heard! I was awakened this morning to their tune, I say. I have been hearing it constantly ever since. And this house whence I write, Murray says, is two hundred and ten miles from Antwerp. And it is a week off; and there is the bell still jangling its Shadow Dance out of "Dinorah." An audible shadow, you understand, and an invisible sound, but quite distinct; and a plague take the tune!

UNDER THE BELLS.—Who has not seen the church under the bells? Those lofty aisles, those twilight chapels, that cumbersome pulpit with its huge carvings, that wide grey pavement flecked with various light from the jewelled windows, those famous pictures between the voluminous columns over the altars, which twinkle with their ornaments, their votive little silver hearts, legs, limbs, their little guttering tapers, cups of sham roses, and what not? I saw two regiments of little scholars creeping in and forming square, each in its appointed place, under the vast roof; and teachers presently coming to them A stream of light from the jewelled windows beams slanting down upon each little squad of children, and the tall background of the church retires into a greyer gloom. Pattering little feet of laggards arriving echo through the great nave. They trot in and join their regiment, gathered under the slanting sunbeams. What are they learning? Is it truth? Those two grey ladies with their books in their hands in the midst of these little people have no doubt of the truth of every word they have printed under their eyes. Look, through the windows jewelled all over with saints the light comes streaming down from the sky, and Heaven's own illuminations paint the book! A sweet touching picture indeed it is, that of the little children assembled in this immense temple, which has endured for ages, and grave teachers bending over them. Yes, the picture is very pretty of the children and their teachers, and their book—but the text? Is it the truth, the only truth, nothing but the truth? If I thought so, I would go and sit down on the form *cum parvulis*, and learn the precious lesson with all my heart.

BEADLE.—But I submit, an obstacle to conversions is the intrusion and impertinence of that Swiss fellow with the baldric—the officer who answers to the beadle of the British Islands, and is pacing about the church with an eye on the congregation. Now the boast of Catholics is that their churches are open to all; but in certain places and churches there are exceptions. At Rome I have been into Saint Peter's at all hours: the doors are always open,

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the lamps are always burning, the faithful are for ever kneeling at one shrine or the other. But at Antwerp not so. In the afternoon you can go to the church, and be civilly treated; but you must pay a franc at the side gate. In the forenoon the doors are open, to be sure, and there is no one to levy an entrance fee. I was standing ever so still, looking through the great gates of the choir at the twinkling lights, and listening to the distant chants of the priests performing the service, when a sweet chorus from the organ-loft broke out behind me overhead, and I turned round. My friend the drum-major ecclesiastic was down upon me in a moment. "Do not turn your back to the altar during divine service," says he, in very intelligible English. I take the rebuke, and turn a soft right-about face, and listen awhile as the service continues. See it I cannot, nor the altar and its ministrants. We are separated from these by a great screen and closed gates of iron, through which the lamps glitter and the chant comes by gusts only. Seeing a score of children trotting down a side aisle, I think I may follow them. I am tired of looking at that hideous old pulpit with its grotesque monsters and decorations. I slip off to the side aisle; but my friend the drum-major is instantly after me—almost I thought he was going to lay hands on me. "You mustn't go there," says he; "you mustn't disturb the service." I was moving as quietly as might be, and ten paces off there were twenty children kicking and clattering at their ease. I point them out to the Swiss. "They come to pray," says he. "*You* don't come to pray, you——" "When I come to pay," says I, "I am welcome," and with this withering sarcasm, I walk out of church in a huff. I don't envy the feelings of that beadle after receiving point blank such a stroke of wit.

. . . . . .

Leo Belgicus.—Perhaps you will say after this I am a prejudiced critic. I see the pictures in the cathedral fuming under the rudeness of that beadle, or, at the lawful hours and prices, pestered by a swarm of shabby touters, who come behind me chattering in bad English, and who would have me see the sights through their mean greedy eyes. Better see Rubens anywhere than in a church. At the Academy, for example, where you may study him at your leisure. But at church?—I would as soon ask Alexandre Dumas for a sermon. Either would paint you a martyrdom very fiercely and picturesquely—writhing muscles, flaming coals, scowling captains and executioners, swarming groups, and light, shade, colour, most dexterously brilliant or dark; but in Rubens I am admiring the performer rather than the piece. With what astonishing rapidity he travels over his canvas; how

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tellingly the cool lights and warm shadows are made to contrast and relieve each other; how that blazing blowsy penitent in yellow satin and glittering hair carries down the stream of light across the picture! This is the way to work, my boys, and earn a hundred florins a day. See! I am as sure of my line as a skater of making his figure of eight! and down with a sweep goes a brawny arm or a flowing curl of drapery. The figures arrange themselves as if by magic. The paint-pots are exhausted in furnishing brown shadows. The pupils look wondering on, as the master careers over the canvas. Isabel or Helena, wife No. 1 or No. 2, are sitting by, buxom, exuberant, ready to be painted; and the children are boxing in the corner, waiting till they are wanted to figure as cherubs in the picture. Grave burghers and gentlefolks come in on a visit. There are oysters and Rhenish always ready on yonder table. Was there ever such a painter? He has been an ambassador, an actual Excellency, and what better man could be chosen? He speaks all the languages. He earns a hundred florins a day. Prodigious! Thirty-six thousand five hundred florins a year. Enormous! He rides out to his castle with a score of gentlemen after him, like the Governor. That is his own portrait as Saint George. You know he is an English knight? Those are his two wives as the two Maries. He chooses the handsomest wives. He rides the handsomest horses. He paints the handsomest pictures. He gets the handsomest prices for them. That slim young Van Dyck, who was his pupil, has genius too, and is painting all the noble ladies in England, and turning the heads of some of them. And Jordaens—what a droll dog and clever fellow! Have you seen his fat Silenus? The master himself could not paint better. And his altar-piece at Saint Bavon's? He can paint you anything, that Jordaens can—a drunken jollification of boors and doxies, or a martyr howling with half his skin off. What a knowledge of anatomy! But there is nothing like the master—nothing. He can paint you his thirty-six thousand five hundred florins' worth a year. Have you heard of what he has done for the French Court? Prodigious! I can't look at Rubens's pictures without fancying I see that handsome figure swaggering before the canvas. And Hans Hemmelinck at Bruges? Have you never seen that dear old hospital of Saint John, on passing the gate of which you enter into the fifteenth century? I see the wounded soldier still lingering in the house, and tended by the kind grey sisters. His little panel on its easel is placed in the light. He covers his board with the most wondrous beautiful little figures, in robes as bright as rubies and amethysts. I think he must have a magic glass, in which he catches the reflection of little

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cherubs with many-coloured wings, very little and bright. Angels, in long crisp robes of white, surrounded with haloes of gold, come and flutter across the mirror, and he draws them. He hears mass every day. He fasts through Lent. No monk is more austere and holy than Hans. Which do you love best to behold, the lamb or the lion? the eagle rushing through the storm, and pouncing mayhap on carrion; or the linnet warbling on the spray?

By much the most delightful of the *Christopher* set of Rubens to my mind (and *ego* is introduced on these occasions, so that the opinion may pass only for my own, at the reader's humble service to be received or declined) is the "Presentation in the Temple"; splendid in colour, in sentiment sweet and tender, finely conveying the story. To be sure, all the others tell their tale unmistakably, witness that coarse "Salutation," that magnificent "Adoration of the Kings" (at the Museum), by the same strong downright hands; that wonderful "Communion of Saint Francis," which, I think, gives the key to the artist's *faire* better than any of his performances. I have passed hours before that picture in my time, trying and sometimes fancying I could understand by what masses and contrasts the artist arrived at his effect. In many others of the pictures parts of his method are painfully obvious, and you see how grief and agony are produced by blue lips, and eyes rolling bloodshot with dabs of vermilion. There is something simple in the practice. Contort the eyebrow sufficiently, and place the eyeball near it,—by a few lines you have anger or fierceness depicted. Give me a mouth with no special expression, and pop a dab of carmine at each extremity—and there are the lips smiling. This is art if you will, but a very naïve kind of art: and now you know the trick, don't you see how easy it is?

Tu Quoque.—Now you know the trick, suppose you take a canvas and see whether *you* can do it? There are brushes, palettes, and gallipots full of paint and varnish. Have you tried, my dear sir—you, who set up to be a connoisseur? Have you tried? I have—and many a day. And the end of the day's labour? O dismal conclusion! Is this puerile niggling, this feeble scrawl, this impotent rubbish, all you can produce—you, who but now found Rubens commonplace and vulgar, and were pointing out the tricks of his mystery? Pardon, O great chief, magnificent master and poet! You can *do*. We critics, who sneer and are wise, can but pry, and measure, and doubt, and carp. Look at the lion. Did you ever see such a gross, shaggy, mangy, roaring brute? Look at him eating lumps of raw meat—positively bleeding, and raw, and tough—till, faugh! it turns one's stomach to see him—O the

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coarse wretch! Yes, but he is a lion. Rubens has lifted his great hand, and the mark he has made has endured for two centuries, and we still continue wondering at him, and admiring him. What a strength in that arm! What splendour of will hidden behind that tawny beard, and those honest eyes! Sharpen your pen, my good critic. Shoot a feather into him; hit him, and make him wince. Yes, you may hit him fair, and make him bleed, too; but, for all that, he is a lion—a mighty, conquering, generous, rampagious Leo Belgicus—monarch of his wood. And he is not dead yet, and I will not kick at him.

Sir Antony.—In that "Pietà" of Van Dyck, in the Museum, have you ever looked at the yellow-robed angel, with the black scarf thrown over her wings and robe? What a charming figure of grief and beauty! What a pretty compassion it inspires! It soothes and pleases me like a sweet rhythmic chant. See how delicately the yellow robe contrasts with the blue sky behind, and the scarf binds the two! If Rubens lacked grace, Van Dyck abounded in it. What a consummate elegance! What a perfect cavalier! No wonder the fine ladies in England admired Sir Antony. Look at——

Here the clock strikes three, and the three gendarmes who keep the Musée cry out, "Allons! Sortons! Il est trois heures! Allez! Sortez!" and they skip out of the gallery as happy as boys running from school. And we must go too, for though many stay behind—many Britons with Murray's Handbooks in their handsome hands—they have paid a franc for entrance-fee, you see; and we knew nothing about the franc for entrance until those gendarmes with sheathed sabres had driven us out of this Paradise.

But it was good to go and drive on the great quays, and see the ships unlading, and by the citadel, and wonder howabouts and whereabouts it was so strong. We expect a citadel to look like Gibraltar or Ehrenbreitstein at least. But in this one there is nothing to see but a flat plain and some ditches and some trees and mounds of uninteresting green. And then I remember how there was a boy at school, a little dumpy fellow of no personal appearance whatever, who couldn't be overcome except by a much bigger champion, and the immensest quantity of thrashing. A perfect citadel of a boy, with a General Chassé sitting in that bomb-proof casemate, his heart, letting blow after blow come thumping about his head, and never thinking of giving in.

And we go home, and we dine in the company of Britons, at the comfortable Hôtel du Parc, and we have bought a novel

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apiece for a shilling, and every half-hour the sweet carillon plays the waltz from "Dinorah" in the air. And we have been happy; and it seems about a month since we left London yesterday; and nobody knows where we are, and we defy care and the postman.

SPOORWEG.—Vast green flats, speckled by spotted cows, and bounded by a grey frontier of windmills; shining canals stretching through the green; odours like those exhaled from the Thames in the dog-days, and a fine pervading smell of cheese; little trim houses, with tall roofs, and great windows of many panes; gazebos, or summer-houses, hanging over pea-green canals; kind-looking dumpling-faced farmers' women, with laced caps, and golden frontlets and earrings; about the houses and towns which we pass a great air of comfort and neatness; a queer feeling of wonder that you can't understand what your fellow-passengers are saying, the tone of whose voices, and a certain comfortable dowdiness of dress, are so like our own;—whilst we are remarking on these sights, sounds, smells, the little railway journey from Rotterdam to the Hague comes to an end. I speak to the railway porters and hackney coachmen in English, and they reply in their own language, and it seems somehow as if we understood each other perfectly. The carriage drives to the handsome, comfortable, cheerful hotel. We sit down a score at the table; and there is one foreigner and his wife,—I mean every other man and woman at dinner are English. As we are close to the sea and in the midst of endless canals, we have no fish. We are reminded of dear England by the noble prices which we pay for wines. I confess I lost my temper yesterday at Rotterdam, where I had to pay a florin for a bottle of ale (the water not being drinkable, and country or Bavarian beer not being genteel enough for the hotel);—I confess, I say, that my fine temper was ruffled, when the bottle of pale ale turned out to be a pint bottle; and I meekly told the waiter that I had bought beer at Jerusalem at a less price. But then Rotterdam is eighteen hours from London, and the steamer with the passengers and beer comes up to the hotel windows; whilst to Jerusalem they have to carry the ale on camels' backs from Beyrout or Jaffa, and through hordes of marauding Arabs, who evidently don't care for pale ale, though I am told it is not forbidden in the Koran. Mine would have been very good, but I choked with rage whilst drinking it. A florin for a bottle, and that bottle having the words "imperial pint," in bold relief, on the surface! It was too much. I intended not to say anything about it; but I *must* speak. A florin a bottle, and that bottle a pint! Oh, for shame! for shame! I can't cork

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down my indignation; I froth up with fury; I am pale with wrath, and bitter with scorn.

As we drove through the old city at night, how it swarmed and hummed with life! What a special clatter, crowd, and outcry there was in the Jewish quarter, where myriads of young ones were trotting about the fishy street! Why don't they have lamps? We passed by canals seeming so full that a pailful of water more would overflow the place. The *laquais-de-place* calls out the names of the buildings: the town-hall, the cathedral, the arsenal, the synagogue, the statue of Erasmus. Get along! *We* know the statue of Erasmus well enough. We pass over drawbridges by canals where thousands of barges are at roost. At roost—at rest! Shall *we* have rest in those bedrooms, those ancient lofty bedrooms, in that inn where we have to pay a florin for a pint of pa—psha! at the "New Bath Hotel" on the Boompjes? If this dreary edifice is the "New Bath," what must the Old Bath be like? As I feared to go to bed, I sat in the coffee-room as long as I might; but three young men were imparting their private adventures to each other with such freedom and liveliness that I felt I ought not to listen to their artless prattle. As I put the light out, and felt the bed-clothes and darkness overwhelm me, it was with an awful sense of terror—that sort of sensation which I should think going down in a diving-bell would give. Suppose the apparatus goes wrong, and they don't understand your signal to mount? Suppose your matches miss fire when you wake; when you *want* them, when you will have to rise in half-an-hour, and do battle with the horrid enemy who crawls on you in the darkness? I protest I never was more surprised than when I woke and beheld the light of dawn. Indian birds and strange trees were visible on the ancient gilt hangings of the lofty chamber, and through the windows the Boompjes and the ships along the quay. We have all read of deserters being brought out, and made to kneel, with their eyes bandaged, and hearing the word to "Fire" given! I declare I underwent all the terrors of execution that night, and wonder how I ever escaped unwounded.

But if ever I go to the "Bath Hotel," Rotterdam, again, I am a Dutchman. A guilder for a bottle of pale ale, and that bottle a pint! Ah! for shame—for shame!

MINE EASE IN MINE INN.—Do you object to talk about inns? It always seems to me to be very good talk. Walter Scott is full of inns. In "Don Quixote" and "Gil Blas" there is plenty of inn-talk. Sterne, Fielding, and Smollett constantly speak about them; and, in their travels, the last two tot up the

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bill, and describe the dinner quite honestly; whilst Mr. Sterne becomes sentimental over a cab, and weeps generous tears over a donkey.

How I admire and wonder at the information in Murray's Handbooks—wonder how it is got, and admire the travellers who get it. For instance, you read: Amiens (please select your towns), 60,000 inhabitants. Hotels, &c.—"Lion d'Or," good and clean. "Le Lion d'Argent," so so. "Le Lion Noir," bad, dirty, and dear. Now, say, there are three travellers—three inn-inspectors, who are sent forth by Mr. Murray on a great commission, and who stop at every inn in the world. The eldest goes to the "Lion d'Or"—capital house, good table-d'hôte, excellent wine, moderate charges. The second commissioner tries the "Silver Lion"—tolerable house, bed, dinner, bill, and so forth. But fancy Commissioner No. 3—the poor fag, doubtless, and boots of the party. He has to go to the "Lion Noir." He knows he is to have a bad dinner—he eats it uncomplainingly. He is to have bad wine. He swallows it, grinding his wretched teeth, and aware that he will be unwell in consequence. He knows he is to have a dirty bed, and what he is to expect there. He pops out the candle. He sinks into those dingy sheets. He delivers over his body to the nightly tormentors, he pays an exorbitant bill, and he writes down, "Lion Noir, bad, dirty, dear." Next day the commission sets out for Arras, we will say, and they begin again: "Le Cochon d'Or," "Le Cochon d'Argent," "Le Cochon Noir"—and that is poor Boots's inn, of course. What a life that poor man must lead! What horrors of dinners he has to go through! What a hide he must have! And yet not impervious; for unless he is bitten, how is he to be able to warn others? No; on second thoughts, you will perceive that he ought to have a very delicate skin. The monsters ought to troop to him eagerly, and bite him instantaneously and freely, so that he may be able to warn all future handbook-buyers of their danger. I fancy this man devoting himself to danger, to dirt, to bad dinners, to sour wine, to damp beds, to midnight agonies, to extortionate bills. I admire him, I thank him. Think of this champion, who devotes his body for us—this dauntless gladiator going to do battle alone in the darkness, with no other armour than a light helmet of cotton, and a *lorica* of calico. I pity and honour him. Go, Spartacus! Go, devoted man—to bleed, to groan, to suffer—and smile in silence as the wild beasts assail thee!

How did I come into this talk? I protest it was the word inn set me off—and here is one, the "Hôtel de Belle Vue," at the Hague, as comfortable, as handsome, as cheerful as any I ever took

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mine ease in. And the Bavarian beer, my dear friend, how good and brisk and light it is! Take another glass—it refreshes and does not stupefy—and then we will sally out, and see the town and the park and the pictures.

The prettiest little brick city, the pleasantest little park to ride in, the neatest comfortable people walking about, the canals not unsweet, and busy and picturesque with old-world life. Rows upon rows of houses, built with the neatest little bricks, with windows fresh painted, and tall doors polished and carved to a nicety. What a pleasant spacious garden our inn has, all sparkling with autumn flowers, and bedizened with statues! At the end is a row of trees, and a summer-house, over the canal, where you might go and smoke a pipe with Mynheer Van Dunck, and quite cheerfully catch the ague. Yesterday, as we passed, they were making hay, and stacking it in a barge which was lying by the meadow, handy. Round about Kensington Palace there are houses, roofs, chimneys, and bricks like these. I feel that a Dutchman is a man and a brother. It is very funny to read the newspaper, one can understand it somehow. Sure it is the neatest, gayest little city—scores and hundreds of mansions looking like Cheyne Walk, or the ladies' schools about Chiswick and Hackney.

Le Gros Lot.—To a few lucky men the chance befalls of reaching fame at once, and (if it is of any profit *morituro*) retaining the admiration of the world. Did poor Oliver, when he was at Leyden yonder, ever think that he should paint a little picture which should secure him the applause and pity of all Europe for a century after? He and Sterne drew the twenty thousand prize of fame. The latter had splendid instalments during his lifetime. The ladies pressed round him; the wits admired him; the fashion hailed the successor of Rabelais. Goldsmith's little gem was hardly so valued until later days. Their works still form the wonder and delight of the lovers of English art; and the pictures of the Vicar and Uncle Toby are among the masterpieces of our English school. Here in the Hague Gallery is Paul Potter's pale eager face, and yonder is the magnificent work by which the young fellow achieved his fame. How did you, so young, come to paint so well? What hidden power lay in that weakly lad, that enabled him to achieve such a wonderful victory? Could little Mozart, when he was five years old, tell you how he came to play those wonderful sonatas? Potter was gone out of the world before he was thirty, but left this prodigy (and I know not how many more specimens of his genius and skill) behind him. The details of this admirable picture are as curious as the effect is admirable and complete. The weather being unsettled,

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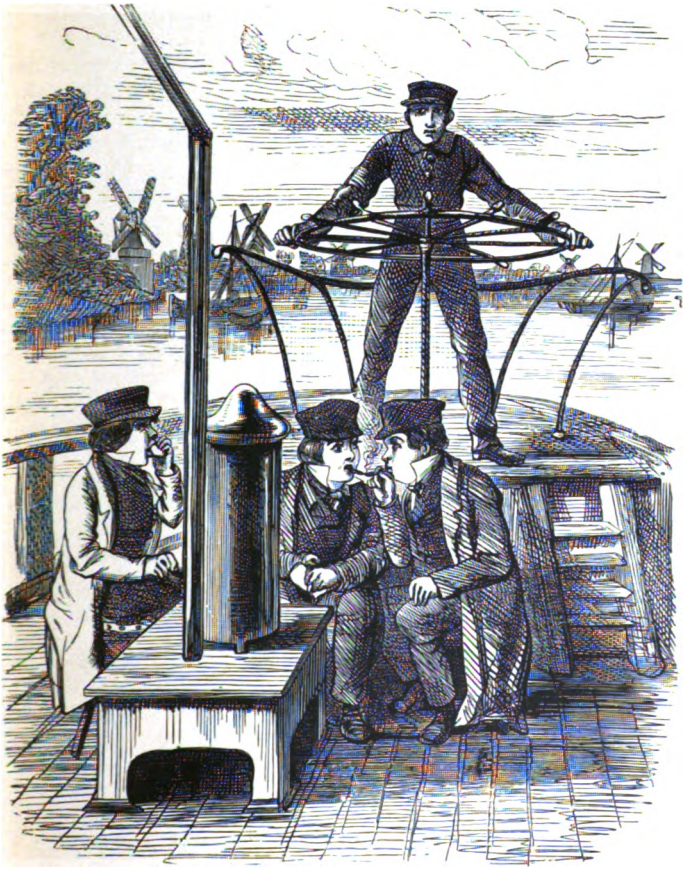

LITTLE DUTCHMEN

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and clouds and sunshine in the gusty sky, we saw in our little tour numberless Paul Potters—the meadows streaked with sunshine and spotted with the cattle, the city twinkling in the distance, the thunder-clouds glooming overhead. Napoleon carried off the picture (*vide* Murray) amongst the spoils of his bow and spear to decorate his triumph at the Louvre. If I were a conquering prince, I would have this picture certainly, and the Raphael "Madonna" from Dresden, and the Titian "Assumption" from Venice, and that matchless Rembrandt of the "Dissection." The prostrate nations would howl with rage as my gendarmes took off the pictures, nicely packed, and addressed to "Mr. the Director of my Imperial Palace of the Louvre, at Paris. This side uppermost." The Austrians, Prussians, Saxons, Italians, &c., should be free to come and visit my capital, and bleat with tears before the pictures torn from their native cities. Their ambassadors would meekly remonstrate, and with faded grins make allusions to the feeling of despair occasioned by the absence of the beloved works of art! Bah! I would offer them a pinch of snuff out of my box as I walked along my gallery, with their Excellencies cringing after me. Zenobia was a fine woman and a queen, but she had to walk in Aurelian's triumph. The *procédé* was *peu délicat? En usez-vous, mon cher monsieur?* (The Marquis says the "Macaba" is delicious.) What a splendour of colour there is in that cloud! What a richness, what a freedom of handling, and what a marvellous precision! I trod upon your Excellency's corn!—a thousand pardons. His Excellency grins and declares that he rather likes to have his corns trodden on. Were you ever very angry with Soult—about that Murillo which we have bought? The veteran loved that picture because it saved the life of a fellow-creature—the fellow-creature who hid it, and whom the Duke intended to hang unless the picture was forthcoming.

We gave several thousand pounds for it—how many thousand? About its merit is a question of taste which we will not here argue. If you choose to place Murillo in the first class of painters, founding his claim upon these Virgin altar-pieces, I am your humble servant. Tom Moore painted altar-pieces as well as Milton, and warbled Sacred Songs and Loves of the Angels after his fashion. I wonder did Watteau ever try historical subjects? And as for Greuze, you know that his heads will fetch £1000, £1500, £2000—as much as a Sèvres *cabaret* of Rose du Barri. If cost price is to be your criterion of worth, what shall we say to that little receipt for ten pounds for the copyright of "Paradise Lost," which used to hang in old Mr. Rogers's room? When living painters, as frequently happens in our days, see their pictures sold at auctions for four or

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five times the sums which they originally received, are they enraged or elated? A hundred years ago the state of the picture-market was different: that dreary old Italian stock was much higher than at present; Rembrandt himself, a close man, was known to be in difficulties. If ghosts are fond of money still, what a wrath his must be at the present value of his works!

The Hague Rembrandt is the greatest and grandest of all his pieces to my mind. Some of the heads are as sweetly and lightly painted as Gainsborough's; the faces not ugly, but delicate and high-bred; the exquisite grey tones are charming to mark and study; the heads not plastered, but painted with a free liquid brush: the result, one of the great victories won by this consummate chief, and left for the wonder and delight of succeeding ages.

The humblest volunteer in the ranks of art, who has served a campaign or two ever so ingloriously, has at least this good fortune of understanding, or fancying he is able to understand, how the battle has been fought, and how the engaged general won it. This is the Rhinelander's most brilliant achievement—victory—along the whole line. The "Night-watch" at Amsterdam is magnificent in parts, but on the side to the spectator's right, smoky and dim. The "Five Masters of the Drapers" is wonderful for depth, strength, brightness, massive power. What words are these to express a picture! to describe a description! I once saw a moon riding in the sky serenely, attended by her sparkling maids of honour, and a little lady said, with an air of great satisfaction, "*I must sketch it.*" Ah, my dear lady, if with an H.B., a Bristol board, and a bit of india-rubber, you can sketch the starry firmament on high, and the moon in her glory, I make you my compliment! I can't sketch "The Five Drapers" with any ink or pen at present at command—but can look with all my eyes, and be thankful to have seen such a masterpiece.

They say he was a moody, ill-conditioned man, the old tenant of the mill. What does he think of the "Vander Helst" which hangs opposite his "Night-watch," and which is one of the great pictures of the world? It is not painted by so great a man as Rembrandt; but there it is—to see it is an event of your life. Having beheld it, you have lived in the year 1648, and celebrated the Treaty of Münster. You have shaken the hands of the Dutch Guardsmen, eaten from their platters, drunk their Rhenish, heard their jokes as they wagged their jolly beards. The Amsterdam catalogue discourses thus about it:—a model catalogue: it gives you the prices paid, the signatures of the painters, a succinct description of the work.

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"This masterpiece represents a banquet of the Civic Guard, which took place on the 18th June 1648, in the great hall of the St. Joris Doele, on the Singel at Amsterdam, to celebrate the conclusion of the Peace at Münster. The thirty-five figures composing the picture are all portraits.

"'The Captain WITSE' is placed at the head of the table, and attracts our attention first. He is dressed in black velvet, his breast covered with a cuirass, on his head a broad-brimmed black hat with white plumes. He is comfortably seated on a chair of black oak with a velvet cushion, and holds in his left hand, supported on his knee, a magnificent drinking-horn, surrounded by a St. George destroying the dragon, and ornamented with olive-leaves. The captain's features express cordiality and good-humour; he is grasping the hand of 'Lieutenant VAN WAVERN' seated near him in a habit of dark grey, with lace and buttons of gold, lace-collar and wrist-bands, his feet crossed, with boots of yellow leather, with large tops, and gold spurs, on his head a black hat and dark-brown plumes. Behind him, at the centre of the picture, is the standard-bearer, 'JACOB BANNING,' in an easy martial attitude, hat in hand, his right hand on his chair, his right leg on his left knee. He holds the flag of blue silk, in which the Virgin is embroidered" (such a silk! such a flag! such a piece of painting!), "emblematic of the town of Amsterdam. The banner covers his shoulder, and he looks towards the spectator frankly and complacently.

"The man behind him is probably one of the sergeants. His head is bare. He wears a cuirass, and yellow gloves, grey stockings, and boots with large tops, and kneecaps of cloth. He has a napkin on his knees, and in his hand a piece of ham, a slice of bread, and a knife. The old man behind is probably 'WILLIAM THE DRUMMER.' He has his hat in his right hand, and in his left a gold-footed wineglass, filled with white wine. He wears a red scarf, and a black satin doublet, with little slashes of yellow silk. Behind the drummer, two matchlock-men are seated at the end of the table. One in a large black habit, a napkin on his knee, a *hausse-col* of iron, and a linen scarf and collar. He is eating with his knife. The other holds a long glass of white wine. Four musketeers, with different shaped hats, are behind these, one holding a glass, the three others with their guns on their shoulders. Other guests are placed between the personage who is giving the toast and the standard-bearer. One with his hat off, and his hand uplifted, is talking to another. The second is carving a fowl. A third holds a silver plate; and another, in the background, a silver flagon, from which he fills a cup. The corner behind the captain is filled by two seated personages, one of whom is peeling an orange.

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Two others are standing, armed with halberts, of whom one holds a plumed hat. Behind him are other three individuals, one of them holding a pewter pot, on which the name 'Poock,' the landlord of the 'Hotel Doele,' is engraved. At the back, a maid-servant is coming in with a pasty, crowned with a turkey. Most of the guests are listening to the captain. From an open window in the distance, the façades of two houses are seen, surmounted by stone figures of sheep."

There, now you know all about it: now you can go home and paint just such another. If you do, do pray remember to paint the hands of the figures as they are here depicted; they are as wonderful portraits as the faces. None of your slim Van Dyck elegancies, which have done duty at the cuffs of so many doublets; but each man with a hand for himself, as with a face for himself. I blushed for the coarseness of one of the chiefs in this great company, that fellow behind "WILLIAM THE DRUMMER," splendidly attired, sitting full in the face of the public; and holding a pork-bone in his hand. Suppose the *Saturday Review* critic were to come suddenly on this picture? Ah! what a shock it would give that noble nature! Why is that knuckle of pork not painted out? at any rate, why is not a little fringe of lace painted round it? or a cut pink paper? or couldn't a smelling-bottle be painted in instead, with a crest and a gold top, or a cambric pocket-handkerchief, in lieu of the horrid pig, with a pink coronet in the corner? or suppose you covered the man's hand (which is very coarse and strong), and gave him the decency of a kid glove? But a piece of pork in a naked hand? O nerves and eau-de-cologne, hide it, hide it!

In spite of this lamentable coarseness, my noble sergeant, give me thy hand as nature made it! A great, and famous, and noble handiwork I have seen here. Not the greatest picture in the world —not a work of the highest genius—but a performance so great, various, and admirable, so shrewd of humour, so wise of observation, so honest and complete of expression, that to have seen it has been a delight, and to remember it will be a pleasure for days to come. Well done, Bartholomeus Vander Helst! Brave, meritorious, victorious, happy Bartholomew, to whom it has been given to produce a masterpiece!

May I take off my hat and pay a respectful compliment to Jan Steen, Esquire? He is a glorious composer. His humour is as frank as Fielding's. Look at his own figure sitting in the window-sill yonder, and roaring with laughter! What a twinkle in the eyes! what a mouth it is for a song, or a joke, or a noggin! I think the composition in some of Jan's pictures amounts to the

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sublime, and look at them with the same delight and admiration which I have felt before works of the very highest style. This gallery is admirable—and the city in which the gallery is, is perhaps even more wonderful and curious to behold than the gallery.

The first landing at Calais (or, I suppose, on any foreign shore) —the first sight of an Eastern city—the first view of Venice—and this of Amsterdam, are among the delightful shocks which I have had as a traveller. Amsterdam is as good as Venice, with a superadded humour and grotesqueness, which gives the sightseer the most singular zest and pleasure. A run through Pekin I could hardly fancy to be more odd, strange, and yet familiar. This rush, and crowd, and prodigious vitality; this immense swarm of life; these busy waters, crowding barges, swinging drawbridges, piled ancient gables, spacious markets teeming with people; that ever-wonderful Jews' quarter; that dear old world of painting and the past, yet alive, and throbbing, and palpable—actual, and yet passing before you swiftly and strangely as a dream! Of the many journeys of this Roundabout life, that drive through Amsterdam is to be specially and gratefully remembered. You have never seen the palace of Amsterdam, my dear sir? Why, there's a marble hall in that palace that will frighten you as much as any hall in "Vathek," or a nightmare. At one end of that old, cold, glassy, glittering, ghostly, marble hall there stands a throne, on which a white marble king ought to sit with his white legs gleaming down into the white marble below, and his white eyes looking at a great white marble Atlas, who bears on his icy shoulders a blue globe as big as the full moon. If he were not a genie, and enchanted, and with a strength altogether hyperatlantean, he would drop the moon with a shriek on to the white marble floor, and it would splinter into perdition. And the palace would rock, and heave, and tumble; and the waters would rise, rise, rise; and the gables sink, sink, sink; and the barges would rise up to the chimneys; and the water-souchee fishes would flap over the Boompjes, where the pigeons and storks used to perch; and the Amster, and the Rotter, and the Saar, and the Op, and all the dams of Holland would burst, and the Zuyder Zee roll over the dykes; and you would wake out of your dream, and find yourself sitting in your arm-chair.

Was it a dream? it seems like one. Have we been to Holland? have we heard the chimes at midnight at Antwerp? Were we really away for a week, or have I been sitting up in the room dozing, before this stale old desk? Here's the desk; yes. But, if it has been a dream, how could I have learned to hum that tune

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out of "Dinorah"? Ah, is it that tune, or myself that I am humming? If it was a dream, how comes this yellow NOTICE DES TABLEAUX DU MUSÉE D'AMSTERDAM AVEC FACSIMILE DES MONOGRAMMES before me, and this signature of the gallant

Yes, indeed, it was a delightful little holiday; it lasted a whole week. With the exception of that little pint of *amari aliquid* at Rotterdam, we were all very happy. We might have gone on being happy for whoever knows how many days more? a week more, ten days more: who knows how long that dear teetotum happiness can be made to spin without toppling over?

But one of the party had desired letters to be sent *poste restante*, Amsterdam. The post-office is hard by that awful palace where the Atlas is, and which we really saw.

There was only one letter, you see. Only one chance of finding us. There it was. "The post has only this moment come in," says the smirking commissioner. And he hands over the papei, thinking he has done something clever.

Before the letter had been opened, I could read COME BACK, as clearly as if it had been painted on the wall. It was all over. The spell was broken. The sprightly little holiday fairy that had frisked and gambolled so kindly beside us for eight days of sunshine —or rain which was as cheerful as sunshine—gave a parting piteous look, and whisked away and vanished. And yonder scuds the postman, and here is the old desk.

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ON A JOKE I ONCE HEARD FROM THE LATE THOMAS HOOD

THE good-natured reader who has perused some of these rambling papers has long since seen (if to see has been worth his trouble) that the writer belongs to the old-fashioned classes of this world, loves to remember very much more than to prophesy, and though he can't help being carried onward, and downward, perhaps, on the hill of life, the swift milestones marking their forties, fifties—how many tens or lustres shall we say?—he sits under Time, the white-wigged charioteer, with his back to the horses, and his face to the past, looking at the receding landscape and the hills fading into the grey distance. Ah me! those grey distant hills were green once, and *here*, and covered with smiling people! As we came *up* the hill there was difficulty, and here and there a hard pull to be sure, but strength, and spirits, and all sorts of cheery incident and companionship on the road; there were the tough struggles (by Heaven's merciful will) overcome, the pauses, the faintings, the weakness, the lost way, perhaps, the bitter weather, the dreadful partings, the lonely night, the passionate grief—towards these I turn my thoughts as I sit and think in my hobby-coach under Time, the silver-wigged charioteer. The young folks in the same carriage meanwhile are looking forwards. Nothing escapes their keen eyes—not a flower at the side of a cottage garden, nor a bunch of rosy-faced children at the gate: the landscape is all

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bright, the air brisk and jolly, the town yonder looks beautiful, and do you think they have learned to be difficult about the dishes at the inn?

Now, suppose Paterfamilias on his journey with his wife and children in the sociable, and he passes an ordinary brick house on the road with an ordinary little garden in the front, we will say, and quite an ordinary knocker to the door, and as many sashed windows as you please, quite common and square, and tiles, windows, chimney-pots, quite like others; or suppose, in driving over such and such a common, he sees an ordinary tree, and an ordinary donkey browsing under it, if you like—wife and daughter look at these objects without the slightest particle of curiosity or interest. What is a brass knocker to them but a lion's head, or what not? and a thorn-tree with a pool beside it, but a pool in which a thorn and a jackass are reflected?

But you remember how once upon a time your heart used to beat, as you beat on that brass knocker, and whose eyes looked from the window above. You remember how by that thorn-tree and pool, where the geese were performing a prodigious evening concert, there might be seen, at a certain hour, somebody in a certain cloak and bonnet, who happened to be coming from a village yonder, and whose image has flickered in that pool. In that pool, near the thorn? Yes, in that goose-pool, never mind how long ago, when there were reflected the images of the geese—and two geese more. Here, at least, an oldster may have the advantage of his young fellow-travellers, and so Putney Heath or the New Road may be invested with a halo of brightness invisible to them, because it only beams out of his own soul.

I have been reading the "Memorials of Hood" by his children,* and wonder whether the book will have the same interest for others and for younger people, as for persons of my own age and calling. Books of travel to any country become interesting to us who have been there. Men revisit the old school, though hateful to them, with ever so much kindliness and sentimental affection. There was the tree under which the bully licked you: here the ground where you had to fag out on holidays, and so forth. In a word, my dear sir, *You* are the most interesting subject to yourself, of any that can occupy your worship's thoughts. I have no doubt, a Crimean soldier, reading a history of that siege, and how Jones and the gallant 99th were ordered to charge or what not, thinks, "Ah, yes, we of the 100th were placed so and so, I perfectly remember." So with this memorial of poor Hood, it may have, no doubt, a greater interest for me than for others, for I was fighting, so to speak, in a

* *Memorials of Thomas Hood.* Moxon, 1860. 2 vols.

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SIR J–SH–A R–N–LDS IN A DOMINO. DR. G–LDSM–TH IN AN OLD ENGLISH DRESS

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different part of the field, and engaged, a young subaltern, in the Battle of Life, in which Hood fell, young still, and covered with glory. "The Bridge of Sighs" was his Corunna, his heights of Abraham—sickly, weak, wounded, he fell in the full blaze and fame of that great victory.

What manner of man was the genius who penned that famous song? What like was Wolfe, who climbed and conquered on those famous heights of Abraham? We all want to know details regarding men who have achieved famous feats, whether of war, or wit, or eloquence, or endurance, or knowledge. His one or two happy and heroic actions take a man's name and memory out of the crowd of names and memories. Henceforth he stands eminent. We scan him: we want to know all about him; we walk round and examine him, are curious, perhaps, and think are we not as strong and tall and capal as yonder champion; were we not bred as well, and could we not endure the winter's cold as well as he? Or we look up with all our eyes of admiration; will find no fault in our hero: declare his beauty and proportions perfect; his critics envious detractors, and so forth. Yesterday, before he performed his feat, he was nobody. Who cared about his birthplace, his parentage, or the colour of his hair? To-day, by some single achievement, or by a series of great actions to which his genius accustoms us, he is famous, and antiquarians are busy finding out under what schoolmaster's ferule he was educated, where his grandmother was vaccinated, and so forth. If half-a-dozen washing-bills of Goldsmith's were to be found to-morrow, would they not inspire a general interest, and be printed in a hundred papers? I lighted upon Oliver, not very long since, in an old Town and Country Magazine, at the Pantheon masquerade "in an old English habit." Straightway my imagination ran out to meet him, to look at him, to follow him about. I forgot the names of scores of fine gentlemen of the past age who were mentioned besides. We want to see this man who has amused and charmed us; who has been our friend, and given us hours of pleasant companionship and kindly thought. I protest when I came, in the midst of those names of people of fashion, and beaux, and demireps, upon those names "*Sir J. R–yn–lds, in a domino; Mr. Cr–d–ck and Dr. G–ldsm–th, in two old English dresses,*" I had, so to speak, my heart in my mouth. What, *you* here, my dear Sir Joshua? Ah, what an honour and privilege it is to see you! This is Mr. Goldsmith? And very much, sir, the ruff and the slashed doublet become you! O Doctor! what a pleasure I had and have in reading the "Animated Nature"! How *did* you learn the secret of writing the decasyllable line, and whence that sweet wailing note of tenderness that accompanies your song? Was

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Beau Tibbs a real man, and will you do me the honour of allowing me to sit at your table at supper? Don't you think you know how he would have talked? Would you not have liked to hear him prattle over the champagne?

Now, Hood is passed away—passed off the earth as much as Goldsmith or Horace. The times in which he lived, and in which very many of us lived and were young, are changing or changed. I saw Hood once as a young man, at a dinner which seems almost as ghostly now as that masquerade at the Pantheon (1772), of which we were speaking anon. It was at a dinner of the Literary Fund, in that vast apartment which is hung round with the portraits of very large Royal Freemasons, now unsubstantial ghosts. There at the end of the room was Hood. Some publishers, I think, were our companions. I quite remember his pale face; he was thin and deaf, and very silent; he scarcely opened his lips during the dinner, and he made one pun. Some gentleman missed his snuff-box, and Hood said,——(the Freemasons' Tavern was kept, you must remember, by Mr. CUFF in those days, not by its present proprietors). Well, the box being lost, and asked for, and CUFF (remember that name) being the name of the landlord, Hood opened his silent jaws and said * * * Shall I tell you what he said? It was not a very good pun, which the great punster then made. Choose your favourite pun out of "Whims and Oddities," and fancy that was the joke which he contributed to the hilarity of our little table.

Where those asterisks are drawn on the page, you must know, a pause occurred, during which I was engaged with "Hood's Own," having been referred to the book by this life of the author which I have just been reading. I am not going to dissert on Hood's humour; I am not a fair judge. Have I not said elsewhere that there are one or two wonderfully old gentlemen still alive who used to give me tips when I was a boy? I can't be a fair critic about them. I always think of that sovereign, that rapture of raspberry-tarts, which made my young days happy. Those old sovereign-contributors may tell stories ever so old, and I shall laugh; they may commit murder, and I shall believe it was justifiable homicide. There is my friend Baggs, who goes about abusing me, and of course our dear mutual friends tell me. Abuse away, *mon bon!* You were so kind to me when I wanted kindness, that you may take the change out of that gold now, and say I am a cannibal and negro, if you will. Ha, Baggs! Dost thou wince as thou readest this line? Does guilty conscience throbbing at thy breast tell thee of whom the fable is narrated? Puff out thy wrath, and, when it has ceased to blow, my Baggs

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shall be to me as the Baggs of old—the generous, the gentle, the friendly.

No, on second thoughts, I am determined I will not repeat that joke which I heard Hood make. He says he wrote these jokes with such ease that he sent manuscripts to the publishers faster than they could acknowledge the receipt thereof. I won't say that they were all good jokes, or that to read a great book full of them is a work at present altogether jocular. Writing to a friend respecting some memoir of him which had been published, Hood says, "You will judge how well the author knows me, when he says my mind is rather serious than comic." At the time when he wrote these words, he evidently undervalued his own serious power, and thought that in punning and broad-grinning lay his chief strength. Is not there something touching in that simplicity and humility of faith? "To make laugh is my calling," says he; "I must jump, I must grin, I must tumble, I must turn language head over heels, and leap through grammar;" and he goes to his work humbly and courageously, and what he has to do that does he with all his might, through sickness, through sorrow, through exile, poverty, fever, depression—there he is, always ready to his work, and with a jewel of genius in his pocket! Why, when he laid down his puns and pranks, put the motley off, and spoke out of his heart, all England and America listened with tears and wonder! Other men have delusions of conceit, and fancy themselves greater than they are, and that the world slights them. Have we not heard how Liston always thought he ought to play Hamlet? Here is a man with a power to touch the heart almost unequalled, and he passes days and years in writing, "Young Ben he was a nice young man," and so forth. To say truth, I have been reading in a book of "Hood's Own" until I am perfectly angry. "You great man, you good man, you true genius and poet," I cry out, as I turn page after page. "Do, do make no more of these jokes, but be yourself, and take your station."

When Hood was on his death-bed, Sir Robert Peel, who only knew of his illness, not of his imminent danger, wrote to him a noble and touching letter, announcing that a pension was conferred on him.

"I am more than repaid," writes Peel, "by the personal satisfaction which I have had in doing that for which you return me warm and characteristic acknowledgments.

"You perhaps think that you are known to one with such multifarious occupations as myself, merely by general reputation as an author; but I assure you that there can be little, which you

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have written and acknowledged, which I have not read; and that there are few who can appreciate and admire more than myself the good sense and good feeling which have taught you to infuse so much fun and merriment into writings correcting folly and exposing absurdities, and yet never trespassing beyond those limits within which wit and facetiousness are not very often confined. You may write on with the consciousness of independence, as free and unfettered, as if no communication had ever passed between us. I am not conferring a private obligation upon you, but am fulfilling the intentions of the legislature, which has placed at the disposal of the Crown a certain sum (miserable, indeed, in amount) to be applied to the recognition of public claims on the bounty of the Crown. If you will review the names of those whose claims have been admitted on account of their literary or scientific eminence, you will find an ample confirmation of the truth of my statement.

"One return, indeed, I shall ask of you,—that you will give me the opportunity of making your personal acquaintance."

And Hood, writing to a friend, enclosing a copy of Peel's letter, says, "Sir R. Peel came from Burleigh on Tuesday night, and went down to Brighton on Saturday. If he had written by post, I should not have had it till to-day. So he sent his servant with the enclosed on *Saturday night;* another mark of considerate attention." He is frightfully unwell, he continues: his wife says he looks *quite green;* but ill as he is, poor fellow, "his well is not dry. He has pumped out a sheet of Christmas fun, is drawing some cuts, and shall write a sheet more of his novel."

Oh, sad, marvellous picture of courage, of honesty, of patient endurance, of duty struggling against pain! How noble Peel's figure is standing by that sick bed! how generous his words, how dignified and sincere his compassion! And the poor dying man, with a heart full of natural gratitude towards his noble benefactor, must turn to him and say—"If it be well to be remembered by a Minister, it is better still not to be forgotten by him in a 'hurly Burleigh'!" Can you laugh? Is not the joke horribly pathetic from the poor dying lips? As dying Robin Hood must fire a last shot with his bow—as one reads of Catholics on their death-beds putting on a Capuchin dress to go out of the world—here is poor Hood at his last hour putting on his ghastly motley, and uttering one joke more.

He dies, however, in dearest love and peace with his children, wife, friends; to the former especially his whole life had been devoted, and every day showed his fidelity, simplicity, and affec-

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tion. In going through the record of his most pure, modest, honourable life, and living along with him, you come to trust him thoroughly, and feel that here is a most loyal, affectionate, and upright soul, with whom you have been brought into communion. Can we say as much of the lives of all men of letters? Here is one at least without guile, without pretension, without scheming, of a pure life, to his family and little modest circle of friends tenderly devoted.

And what a hard work, and what a slender reward! In the little domestic details with which the book abounds, what a simple life is shown to us! The most simple little pleasures and amusements delight and occupy him. You have revels on shrimps; the good wife making the pie; details about the maid, and criticisms on her conduct; wonderful tricks played with the plum-pudding—all the pleasures centring round the little humble home. One of the first men of his time, he is appointed editor of a Magazine at a salary of three hundred pounds per annum, signs himself exultingly "Ed. N. M. M.," and the family rejoice over the income as over a fortune. He goes to a Greenwich dinner—what a feast and a rejoicing afterwards!—

"Well, we drank 'the Boz' with a delectable clatter, which drew from him a good warm-hearted speech. . . . He looked very well, and had a younger brother along with him. . . . Then we had songs. Barham chanted a Robin Hood ballad, and Cruikshank sang a burlesque ballad of Lord H——; and somebody, unknown to me, gave a capital imitation of a French showman. Then we toasted Mrs. Boz, and the Chairman, and Vice, and the Traditional Priest sang the 'Deep deep sea,' in his deep deep voice; and then we drank to Procter, who wrote the said song; also Sir J. Wilson's good health, and Cruikshank's, and Ainsworth's: and a Manchester friend of the latter sang a Manchester ditty, so full of trading stuff, that it really seemed to have been not composed, but manufactured. Jerdan, as Jerdanish as usual on such occasions—you know how paradoxically he is *quite at home* in *dining out*. As to myself, I had to make my *second maiden speech*, for Mr. Monckton Milnes proposed my health in terms my modesty might allow me to repeat to *you*, but my memory won't. However, I ascribed the toast to my notoriously bad health, and assured them that their wishes had already improved it—that I felt a brisker circulation—a more genial warmth about the heart, and explained that a certain trembling of my hand was not from palsy, or my old ague, but an inclination in my hand to shake itself with every one present. Whereupon I had to go through the friendly ceremony with as

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many of the company as were within reach, besides a few more who came express from the other end of the table. *Very* gratifying, wasn't it? Though I cannot go quite so far as Jane, who wants me to have that hand chopped off, bottled, and preserved in spirits. She was sitting up for me, very anxiously, as usual when I go out, because I am so domestic and steady, and was down at the door before I could ring at the gate, to which Boz kindly sent me in his own carriage. Poor girl! what *would* she do if she had a wild husband instead of a tame one?"

And the poor anxious wife is sitting up, and fondles the hand which has been shaken by so many illustrious men! The little feast dates back only eighteen years, and yet somehow it seems as distant as a dinner at Mr. Thrale's, or a meeting at Will's.

Poor little gleam of sunshine! very little good cheer enlivens that sad simple life. We have the triumph of the Magazine: then a new Magazine projected and produced: then illness and the last scene, and the kind Peel by the dying man's bedside speaking noble words of respect and sympathy, and soothing the last throbs of the tender honest heart.

I like, I say, Hood's life even better than his books, and I wish, with all my heart, *Monsieur et cher confrère*, the same could be said for both of us, when the inkstream of our life hath ceased to run. Yes: if I drop first, dear Baggs, I trust you may find reason to modify some of the unfavourable views of my character, which you are freely imparting to our mutual friends. What ought to be the literary man's point of honour nowadays? Suppose, friendly reader, you are one of the craft, what legacy would you like to leave to your children? First of all (and by Heaven's gracious help) you would pray and strive to give them such an endowment of love, as should last certainly for all their lives, and perhaps be transmitted to their children. You would (by the same aid and blessing) keep your honour pure, and transmit a name unstained to those who have a right to bear it. You would,—though this faculty of giving is one of the easiest of the literary man's qualities—you would, out of your earnings, small or great, be able to help a poor brother in need, to dress his wounds, and, if it were but twopence, to give him succour. Is the money which the noble Macaulay gave to the poor lost to his family? God forbid. To the loving hearts of his kindred is it not rather the most precious part of their inheritance? It was invested in love and righteous doing, and it bears interest in heaven. You will, if letters be your vocation, find saving harder than giving and spending. To save be your endeavour, too, against the night's coming when no man may

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work; when the arm is weary with the long day's labour; when the brain perhaps grows dark; when the old, who can labour no more, want warmth and rest, and the young ones call for supper.

I copied the little galley-slave who is made to figure in the initial letter of this paper, from a quaint old silver spoon which we purchased in a curiosity-shop at the Hague. It is one of the gift spoons so common in Holland, and which have multiplied so astonishingly of late years at our dealers' in old silverware. Along the stem of the spoon are written the words: "Anno 1609, *Bin ick aldus ghekledt gheghaen*"—"In the year 1609 I went thus clad." The good Dutchman was released from his Algerine captivity (I imagine his figure looks like that of a slave amongst the Moors), and in his thank-offering to some godchild at home, he thus piously records his escape.

Was not poor Cervantes also a captive amongst the Moors? Did not Fielding, and Goldsmith, and Smollett, too, die at the chain as well as poor Hood? Think of Fielding going on board his wretched ship in the Thames, with scarce a hand to bid him farewell; of brave Tobias Smollett, and his life, how hard, and how poorly rewarded; of Goldsmith, and the physician whispering, "Have you something on your mind?" and the wild dying eyes answering, "Yes." Notice how Boswell speaks of Goldsmith, and the splendid contempt with which he regards him. Read Hawkins on Fielding, and the scorn with which Dandy Walpole and Bishop Hurd speak of him. Galley-slaves doomed to tug the oar and wear the chain, whilst my Lords and dandies take their pleasure, and hear fine music and disport with fine ladies in the cabin!

But stay. Was there any cause for this scorn? Had some of these great men weaknesses which gave inferiors advantage over them? Men of letters cannot lay their hands on their hearts, and say, "No, the fault was fortune's, and the indifferent world's, not Goldsmith's nor Fielding's." There was no reason why Oliver should always be thriftless; why Fielding and Steele should sponge upon their friends; why Sterne should make love to his neighbours' wives. Swift, for a long time, was as poor as any wag that ever laughed: but he owed no penny to his neighbours: Addison, when he wore his most threadbare coat, could hold his head up, and maintain his dignity: and, I dare vouch, neither of those gentlemen, when they were ever so poor, asked any man alive to pity their condition, and have a regard to the weaknesses incidental to the literary profession. Galley-slave, forsooth! If you are sent to

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prison for some error for which the law awards that sort of laborious seclusion, so much the more shame for you. If you are chained to the oar a prisoner of war, like Cervantes, you have the pain, but not the shame, and the friendly compassion of mankind to reward you. Galley-slaves, indeed! What man has not his oar to pull? There is that wonderful old stroke-oar in the Queen's galley. How many years has he pulled? Day and night, in rough water or smooth, with what invincible vigour and surprising gaiety he plies his arms! There is in the same *Galère Capitaine*, that well-known trim figure, the bow-oar: how he tugs, and with what a will! How both of them have been abused in their time! Take the Lawyer's galley, and that dauntless octogenarian in command: when has *he* ever complained or repined about his slavery? There is the Priest's galley—black and lawn sails: do any mariners out of Thames work harder? When lawyer, and statesman, and divine, and writer are snug in bed, there is a ring at the poor Doctor's bell. Forth he must go, in rheumatism or snow; a galley-slave bearing his galley-pots to quench the flames of fever, to succour mothers and young children in their hour of peril, and, as gently and soothingly as may be, to carry the hopeless patient over to the silent shore. And have we not just read of the actions of the Queen's galleys and their brave crews in the Chinese waters? Men not more worthy of human renown and honour to-day in their victory, than last year in their glorious hour of disaster. So with stout hearts may we ply the oar, messmates all, till the voyage is over, and the Harbour of Rest is found.

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ROUND ABOUT THE CHRISTMAS TREE

THE kindly Christmas tree, from which I trust every gentle reader has pulled a bonbon or two, is yet all aflame whilst I am writing, and sparkles with the sweet fruits of its season. You young ladies, may you have plucked pretty giftlings from it; and out of the cracker sugar-plum which you have split with the captain or the sweet young curate may you have read one of those delicious conundrums which the confectioners introduce into the sweetmeats, and which apply to the cunning passion of love. Those riddles are to be read at *your* age, when I daresay they are amusing. As for Dolly, Merry, and Bell, who are standing at the tree, they don't care about the love-riddle part, but understand the sweet-almond portion very well. They are four, five, six years old. Patience, little people! A dozen merry Christmases more, and you will be reading those wonderful love-conundrums, too. As for us elderly folks, we watch the babies at their sport, and the young people pulling at the branches: and instead of finding bonbons or sweeties in the packets which *we* pluck off the boughs, we find enclosed Mr. Carnifex's review of the quarter's meat; Mr. Sartor's compliments, and little statement for self and the young gentlemen; and Madame de Sainte-Crinoline's respects to the young ladies, who encloses her account, and will send on Saturday, please; or we stretch our hand out to the educational branch of the Christmas tree, and there find a lively and amusing article from the Reverend Henry Holyshade, containing our dear Tommy's exceedingly moderate account for the last term's school expenses.

The tree yet sparkles, I say. I am writing on the day before Twelfth Day, if you must know; but already ever so many of the fruits have been pulled, and the Christmas lights have gone out. Bobby Miseltow, who has been staying with us for a week (and who has been sleeping mysteriously in the bath-room), comes to say he is going away to spend the rest of the holidays with his grandmother—and I brush away the manly tear of regret as I part with the dear child. "Well, Bob, good-bye, since you *will* go. Compliments to grandmamma. Thank her for the turkey. Here's——"

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(*A slight pecuniary transaction takes place at this juncture, and Bob nods and winks, and puts his hand in his waistcoat pocket.*)
"You have had a pleasant week?"

BOB. "Haven't I!" (*And exit, anxious to know the amount of the coin which has just changed hands.*)

He is gone, and as the dear boy vanishes through the door (behind which I see him perfectly), I too cast up a little account of our past Christmas week. When Bob's holidays are over, and the printer has sent me back this manuscript, I know Christmas will be an old story. All the fruit will be off the Christmas tree then; the crackers will have cracked off; the almonds will have been crunched; and the sweet-bitter riddles will have been read; the lights will have perished off the dark green boughs; the toys growing on them will have been distributed, fought for, cherished, neglected, broken. Ferdinand and Fidelia will each keep out of it (be still, my gushing heart!) the remembrance of a riddle read together, of a double-almond munched together, and the moiety of an exploded cracker. . . . The maids, I say, will have taken down all that holly stuff and nonsense about the clocks, lamps, and looking-glasses, the dear boys will be back at school, fondly thinking of the pantomime-fairies whom they have seen; whose gaudy gossamer wings are battered by this time; and whose pink cotton (or silk is it?) lower extremities are all dingy and dusty. Yet but a few days, Bob, and flakes of paint will have cracked off the fairy flower-bowers, and the revolving temples of adamantine lustre will be as shabby as the city of Pekin. When you read this, will Clown still be going on lolling his tongue out of his mouth, and saying "How are you to-morrow?" To-morrow, indeed! He must be almost ashamed of himself (if that cheek is still capable of the blush of shame) for asking the absurd question. To-morrow, indeed! To-morrow the diffugient snows will give place to Spring; the snowdrops will lift their heads; Ladyday may be expected, and the pecuniary duties peculiar to that feast; in place of bonbons, trees will have an eruption of light green knobs; the whitebait season will bloom . . . as if one need go on describing these vernal phenomena, when Christmas is still here, though ending, and the subject of my discourse!

We have all admired the illustrated papers, and noted how boisterously jolly they become at Christmas time. What wassail-bowls, robin-redbreasts, waits, snow landscapes, bursts of Christmas song! And then to think that these festivities are prepared months before—that these Christmas pieces are prophetic! How kind of artists and poets to devise the festivities beforehand, and serve them pat at the proper time! We ought to be grateful to them, as to

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the cook who gets up at midnight and sets the pudding a-boiling which is to feast us at six o'clock. I often think with gratitude of the famous Mr. Nelson Lee—the author of I don't know how many hundred glorious pantomimes—walking by the summer wave at Margate, or Brighton perhaps, revolving in his mind the idea of some new gorgeous spectacle of faëry, which the winter shall see complete. He is like cook at midnight (*si parva licet*). He watches and thinks. He pounds the sparkling sugar of benevolence, the plums of fancy, the sweetmeats of fun, the figs of—well, the figs of fairy fiction, let us say, and pops the whole in the seething cauldron of imagination, and at due season serves up the PANTOMIME.

Very few men in the course of nature can expect to see *all* the pantomimes in one season, but I hope to the end of my life I shall never forego reading about them in that delicious sheet of the *Times* which appears on the morning after Boxing-day. Perhaps reading is even better than seeing. The best way, I think, is to say you are ill, lie in bed, and have the paper for two hours, reading all the way down from Drury Lane to the Britannia at Hoxton. Bob and I went to two pantomimes. One was at the Theatre of Fancy, and the other at the Fairy Opera, and I don't know which we liked the best.

At the Fancy, we saw "Harlequin Hamlet, or Daddy's Ghost and Nunky's Pison," which is all very well—but, gentlemen, if you don't respect Shakspeare, to whom will you be civil? The palace and ramparts of Elsinore by moon and snowlight is one of Loutherbourg's finest efforts. The banqueting hall of the palace is illuminated: the peaks and gables glitter with the snow: the sentinels march blowing their fingers for the cold—the freezing of the nose of one of them is very neatly and dexterously arranged: the snow-storm rises: the winds howl awfully along the battlements: the waves come curling, leaping, foaming to shore. Hamlet's umbrella is whirled away in the storm. He and his two friends stamp on each other's toes to keep them warm. The storm-spirits rise in the air, and are whirled howling round the palace and the rocks. My eyes! what tiles and chimney-pots fly hurtling through the air! As the storm reaches its height (here the wind instruments come in with prodigious effect, and I compliment Mr. Brumby and the violoncellos)—as the snow-storm rises (queek, queek, queek, go the fiddles, and then thrumpty thrump comes a pizzicato movement in Bob Major, which sends a shiver into your very boot-soles), the thunder-clouds deepen (bong, bong, bong, from the violoncellos). The forked lightning quivers through the clouds in a zig-zag scream of violins—and look, look, look! as the frothing, roaring waves come rushing up the battlements, and over the reeling

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parapet, each hissing wave becomes a ghost, sends the gun-carriages rolling over the platform, and plunges howling into the water again.

Hamlet's mother comes on to the battlements to look for her son. The storm whips her umbrella out of her hands, and she retires screaming in pattens.

The cabs on the stand in the great market-place at Elsinore are seen to drive off, and several people are drowned. The gas-lamps along the street are wrenched from their foundations, and shoot through the troubled air. Whist, rush, hish! how the rain roars and pours! The darkness becomes awful, always deepened by the power of the music—and see—in the midst of a rush, and whirl, and scream of spirits of air and wave—what is that ghastly figure moving hither? It becomes bigger, bigger, as it advances down the platform—more ghastly, more horrible, enormous! It is as tall as the whole stage. It seems to be advancing on the stalls and pit, and the whole house screams with terror, as the GHOST OF THE LATE HAMLET comes in, and begins to speak. Several people faint, and the light-fingered gentry pick pockets furiously in the darkness.

In the pitchy darkness, this awful figure throwing his eyes about, the gas in the boxes shuddering out of sight, and the wind instruments bugling the most horrible wails, the boldest spectator must have felt frightened. But hark! what is that silver shimmer of the fiddles? Is it—can it be—the grey dawn peeping in the stormy east? The ghost's eyes look blankly towards it, and roll a ghastly agony. Quicker, quicker ply the violins of Phœbus Apollo. Redder, redder grow the orient clouds. Cockadoodledoo! crows that great cock which has just come out on the roof of the palace. And now the round sun himself pops up from behind the waves of night. Where is the ghost? He is gone! Purple shadows of morn "slant o'er the snowy sward," the city wakes up in life and sunshine, and we confess we are very much relieved at the disappearance of the ghost. We don't like those dark scenes in pantomimes.

After the usual business, that Ophelia should be turned into Columbine was to be expected; but I confess I was a little shocked when Hamlet's mother became Pantaloon, and was instantly knocked down by Clown Claudius. Grimaldi is getting a little old now, but for real humour there are few clowns like him. Mr. Shuter, as the gravedigger, was chaste and comic, as he always is, and the scene-painters surpassed themselves.

"Harlequin Conqueror and the Field of Hastings," at the other house, is very pleasant too. The irascible William is acted with great vigour by Snoxall, and the battle of Hastings is a good piece

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of burlesque. Some trifling liberties are taken with history, but what liberties will not the merry genius of pantomime permit himself? At the battle of Hastings, William is on the point of being defeated by the Sussex Volunteers, very elegantly led by the always pretty Miss Waddy (as Haco Sharpshooter), when a shot from the Normans kills Harold. The fairy Edith hereupon comes forward and finds his body, which straightway leaps up a live harlequin, whilst the Conqueror makes an excellent clown, and the Archbishop of Bayeux a diverting pantaloon, &c. &c. &c.

Perhaps these are not the pantomimes we really saw; but one description will do as well as another. The plots, you see, are a little intricate and difficult to understand in pantomimes; and I may have mixed up one with another. That I was at the theatre on Boxing-night is certain—but the pit was so full that I could only see fairy legs glittering in the distance, as I stood at the door. And if I was badly off, I think there was a young gentleman behind me worse off still. I own that he has good reason (though others have not) to speak ill of me behind my back, and hereby beg his pardon.

Likewise to the gentleman who picked up a party in Piccadilly, who had slipped and fallen in the snow, and was there on his back, uttering energetic expressions, that party begs to offer thanks, and compliments of the season.

Bob's behaviour on New Year's Day, I can assure Doctor Holyshade, was highly creditable to the boy. He had expressed a determination to partake of every dish which was put on the table; but after soup, fish, roast-beef, and roast-goose, he retired from active business until the pudding and mince-pies made their appearance, of which he partook liberally but not too freely. And he greatly advanced in my good opinion by praising the punch, which was of my own manufacture, and which some gentlemen present (Mr. O'M—g—n amongst others) pronounced to be too weak. Too weak! A bottle of rum, a bottle of Madeira, half a bottle of brandy, and two bottles and a half of water—*can* this mixture be said to be too weak for any mortal? Our young friend amused the company during the evening, by exhibiting a two-shilling magic lantern, which he had purchased, and likewise by singing "Sally, come up!" a quaint, but rather monotonous melody, which I am told is sung by the poor negro on the banks of the broad Mississippi.

What other enjoyments did we proffer for the child's amusement during the Christmas week? A great philosopher was giving a lecture to young folks at the British Institution. But when this diversion was proposed to our young friend Bob, he said, "Lecture?

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No, thank you. Not as I knows on," and made sarcastic signals on his nose. Perhaps he is of Doctor Johnson's opinion about lectures: "Lectures, sir! what man would go to hear that imperfectly at a lecture, which he can read at leisure in a book?" *I* never went, of my own choice, to a lecture: that I can vow. As for sermons, they are different: I delight in them, and they cannot, of course, be too long.

Well, we partook of yet other Christmas delights besides pantomime, pudding, and pie. One glorious, one delightful, one most unlucky and pleasant day, we drove in a brougham, with a famous horse, which carried us more quickly and briskly than any of your vulgar railways, over Battersea Bridge, on which the horse's hoofs rang as if it had been iron; through suburban villages, plum-caked with snow; under a leaden sky, in which the sun hung like a red-hot warming-pan; by pond after pond, where not only men and boys, but scores after scores of women and girls, were sliding, and roaring, and clapping their lean old sides with laughter, as they tumbled down, and their hobnailed shoes flew up in the air; the air frosty, with a lilac haze, through which villas, and commons, and churches, and plantations glimmered. We drive up the hill, Bob and I; we make the last two miles in eleven minutes; we pass that poor armless man who sits there in the cold, following you with his eyes. I don't give anything, and Bob looks disappointed. We are set down neatly at the gate, and a horse-holder opens the brougham-door. I don't give anything; again disappointment on Bob's part. I pay a shilling apiece, and we enter into the glorious building, which is decorated for Christmas, and straightway forgetfulness on Bob's part of everything but that magnificent scene. The enormous edifice is all decorated for Bob and Christmas. The stalls, the columns, the fountains, courts, statues, splendours, are all crowned for Christmas. The delicious negro is singing his Alabama choruses for Christmas and Bob. He has scarcely done, when, Tootarootatoo! Mr. Punch is performing his surprising actions, and hanging the beadle. The stalls are decorated. The refreshment tables are piled with good things; at many fountains "MULLED CLARET" is written up in appetising capitals. "Mulled Claret—oh, jolly! How cold it is!" says Bob; I pass on. "It's only three o'clock," says Bob. "No, only three," I say meekly. "We dine at seven," sighs Bob, "and it's so-o-o coo-old." I still would take no hints. No claret, no refreshment, no sandwiches, no sausage-rolls for Bob. At last I am obliged to tell him all. Just before we left home, a little Christmas bill popped in at the door, and emptied my purse at the threshold. I forgot all about the transaction, and had to borrow half-a-crown from John Coachman

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to pay for our entrance into the Palace of Delight. *Now* you see, Bob, why I could not treat you on that second of January, when we drove to the Palace together; when the girls and boys were sliding on the ponds at Dulwich; when the darkling river was full of floating ice, and the sun was like a warming-pan in the leaden sky.

One more Christmas sight we had, of course; and that sight I think I like as well as Bob himself at Christmas, and at all seasons. We went to a certain garden of delight, where, whatever your cares are, I think you can manage to forget some of them, and muse, and be not unhappy: to a garden beginning with a Z, which is as lively as Noah's ark; where the fox has brought his brush, and the cock has brought his comb, and the elephant has brought his trunk, and the kangaroo has brought his bag, and the condor his old white wig, and black satin hood. On this day it was so cold that the white bears winked their pink eyes, as they plapped up and down by their pool, and seemed to say, "Aha, this weather reminds us of dear home!" "Cold! bah! I have got such a warm coat," says brother Bruin, "I don't mind;" and he laughs on his pole and clucks down a bun. The squealing hyænas gnashed their teeth, and laughed at us quite refreshingly at their window; and, cold as it was, Tiger, Tiger, burning bright, glared at us red-hot through his bars, and snorted blasts of hell. The woolly camel leered at us quite kindly as he paced round his ring on his silent pads. We went to our favourite places. Our dear wombat came up, and had himself scratched very affably. Our fellow-creatures in the monkey-room held out their little black hands, and piteously asked us for Christmas alms. Those darling alligators on their rock winked at us in the most friendly way. The solemn eagles sat alone and scowled at us from their peaks; whilst little Tom Ratel tumbled over head and heels for us in his usual diverting manner. If I have cares on my mind, I come to the Zoo, and fancy they don't pass the gate. I recognise my friends, my enemies, in countless cages. I entertained the eagle, the vulture, the old billy-goat, and the black-pated, crimson-necked, blear-eyed, baggy, hook-beaked old marabou stork yesterday at dinner; and when Bob's aunt came to tea in the evening, and asked him what he had seen, he stepped up to her gravely, and said—

"First I saw the white bear, then I saw the black,
Then I saw the camel with a hump upon his back.

Chorus of Children.

Then I saw the camel with a HUMP upon his back!

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Then I saw the grey wolf, with mutton in his maw;
Then I saw the wombat waddle in the straw;
Then I saw the elephant with his waving trunk,
Then I saw the monkeys—mercy, how unpleasantly
they——smelt!"

There! No one can beat that piece of wit, can he, Bob? And so it is all over; but we had a jolly time, whilst you were with us, hadn't we? Present my respects to the Doctor; and I hope, my boy, we may spend another merry Christmas next year.

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ON A CHALK-MARK ON THE DOOR

ON the door-post of the house of a friend of mine, a few inches above the lock, is a little chalk-mark, which some sportive boy in passing has probably scratched on the pillar. The door-steps, the lock, handle, and so forth, are kept decently enough; but this chalk-mark, I suppose some three inches out of the housemaid's beat, has already been on the door for more than a fortnight, and I wonder whether it will be there whilst this paper is being written, whilst it is at the printer's, and, in fine, until the month passes over? I wonder whether the servants in that house will read these remarks about the chalk-mark? That the *Cornhill Magazine* is taken in in that house I know. In fact I have seen it there. In fact I have read it there. In fact I have written it there. In a word, the house to which I allude is mine—the "editor's private residence," to which, in spite of prayers, entreaties, commands, and threats, authors, and ladies especially, *will* send their communications, although they won't understand that they injure their own interests by so doing; for how is a man who has his own work to do, his own exquisite inventions to form and perfect—Maria to rescue from the unprincipled Earl—the atrocious General to confound in his own machinations—the angelic Dean to promote to a bishopric, and so forth—how is a man to do all this, under a hundred interruptions, and keep his nerves and temper in that just and equable state in which they ought to be when he comes to assume the critical office? As you will send here, ladies, I must tell you you have a much worse chance than if you forward your valuable articles to Cornhill. Here your papers arrive, at dinner-time, we will say. Do you suppose that is a pleasant period, and that we are to criticise you between the *ovum* and *malum*, between the soup and the dessert? I have touched, I think, on this subject before. I say again, if you want real justice shown you, don't send your papers to the private residence. At home, for instance, yesterday, having given strict orders that I was to receive nobody, "except on business," do you suppose a smiling young Scottish gentleman, who forced himself into my

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study, and there announced himself as agent of a Cattle-food Company, was received with pleasure? There, as I sat in my arm-chair, suppose he had proposed to draw a couple of my teeth, would I have been pleased? I could have throttled that agent. I daresay the whole of that day's work will be found tinged with a ferocious misanthropy, occasioned by my clever young friend's intrusion. Cattle-food indeed! As if beans, oats, warm mashes, and a ball, are to be pushed down a man's throat just as he is meditating on the great social problem, or (for I think it was my epic I was going to touch up) just as he was about to soar to the height of the empyrean!

Having got my cattle-agent out of the door, I resume my consideration of that little mark on the door-post, which is scored up as the text of the present little sermon; and which I hope will relate, not to chalk, nor to any of its special uses or abuses (such as milk, neck-powder, and the like), but to servants. Surely ours might remove that unseemly little mark. Suppose it were on my coat, might I not request its removal? I remember, when I was at school, a little careless boy, upon whose forehead an ink-mark remained, and was perfectly recognisable for three weeks after its first appearance. May I take any notice of this chalk-stain on the forehead of my house? Whose business is it to wash that forehead? and ought I to fetch a brush and a little hot water, and wash it off myself?

Yes. But that spot removed, why not come down at six, and wash the doorsteps? I daresay the early rising and exercise would do me a great deal of good. The housemaid, in that case, might lie in bed a little later, and have her tea and the morning paper brought to her in bed: then, of course, Thomas would expect to be helped about the boots and knives; cook about the saucepans, dishes, and what not; the lady's-maid would want somebody to take the curl-papers out of her hair, and get her bath ready. You should have a set of servants for the servants, and these under-servants should have slaves to wait on them. The king commands the first lord in waiting to desire the second lord to intimate to the gentleman usher to request the page of the antechamber to entreat the groom of the stairs to implore John to ask the captain of the buttons to desire the maid of the still-room to beg the housekeeper to give out a few more lumps of sugar, as his Majesty has none for his coffee, which probably is getting cold during the negotiation. In our little Brentfords we are all kings, more or less. There are orders, gradations, hierarchies, everywhere. In your house and mine there are mysteries unknown to us. I am not going into the horrid old question of "followers." I don't mean cousins from the country,

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YOUTHFUL PIRATES

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love-stricken policemen, or gentlemen in mufti from Knightsbridge Barracks; but people who have an occult right on the premises; the uncovenanted servants of the house; grey women who are seen at evening with baskets flitting about area-railings; dingy shawls which drop you furtive curtseys in your neighbourhood; demure little Jacks, who start up from behind boxes in the pantry. Those outsiders wear Thomas's crest and livery, and call him "Sir"; those silent women address the female servants as "Mum," and curtsey before them, squaring their arms over their wretched lean aprons. Then, again, those *servi servorum* have dependants in the vast, silent, poverty-stricken world outside your comfortable kitchen fire, in the world of darkness, and hunger, and miserable cold, and dank flagged cellars, and huddled straw, and rags, in which pale children are swarming. It may be your beer (which runs with great volubility) has a pipe or two which communicates with those dark caverns where hopeless anguish pours the groan, and would scarce see light but for a scrap or two of candle which has been whipped away from your worship's kitchen. Not many years ago —I don't know whether before or since that white mark was drawn on the door—a lady occupied the confidential place of housemaid in this "private residence," who brought a good character, who seemed to have a cheerful temper, whom I used to hear clattering and bumping overhead or on the stairs long before daylight—there, I say, was poor Camilla, scouring the plain, trundling, and brushing, and clattering with her pans and brooms, and humming at her work. Well, she had established a smuggling communication of beer over the area frontier. This neat-handed Phyllis used to pack up the nicest baskets of my provender, and convey them to somebody outside—I believe, on my conscience, to some poor friend in distress. Camilla was consigned to her doom. She was sent back to her friends in the country: and when she was gone we heard of many of her faults. She expressed herself, when displeased, in language that I shall not repeat. As for the beer and meat, there was no mistake about them. But *après?* Can I have the heart to be very angry with that poor jade for helping another poorer jade out of my larder? On your honour and conscience, when you were a boy, and the apples looked temptingly over Farmer Quarringdon's hedge, did you never——? When there was a grand dinner at home, and you were sliding, with Master Bacon, up and down the stairs, and the dishes came out, did you ever do such a thing as just to——? Well, in many and many a respect servants are like children. They are under domination. They are subject to reproof, to ill-temper, to petty exactions and stupid tyrannies not seldom. They scheme, conspire, fawn, and are hypocrites. "Little

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boys should not loll on chairs." "Little girls should be seen, and not heard;" and so forth. Have we not almost all learnt these expressions of old foozles: and uttered them ourselves when in the square-toed state? The Eton master who was breaking a lance with our Paterfamilias of late, turned on Paterfamilias, saying, He knows not the nature and exquisite candour of well-bred English boys. Exquisite fiddlestick's end, Mr. Master! Do you mean for to go for to tell us that the relations between young gentlemen and their schoolmasters are entirely frank and cordial; that the lad is familiar with the man who can have him flogged; never shirks his exercises; never gets other boys to do his verses; never does other boys' verses; never breaks bounds; never tells fibs—I mean the fibs permitted by scholastic honour? Did I know of a boy who pretended to such a character, I would forbid my scapegraces to keep company with him. Did I know a schoolmaster who pretended to believe in the existence of many hundred such boys in one school at one time, I would set that man down as a baby in knowledge of the world. "Who was making that noise?" "I don't know, sir."—And he knows it was the boy next him in school. "Who was climbing over that wall?" "I don't know, sir."—And it is in the speaker's own trousers, very likely, the glass-bottle tops have left their cruel scars. And so with servants. "Who ate up the three pigeons which went down in the pigeon-pie at breakfast this morning?" "Oh dear me! sir, it was John, who went away last month!"—or, "I think it was Miss Mary's canary-bird, which got out of the cage, and is so fond of pigeons, it never can have enough of them." Yes, it *was* the canary-bird; and Eliza saw it; and Eliza is ready to vow she did. These statements are not true; but please don't call them lies. This is not lying; this is voting with your party. You *must* back your own side. The servants'-hall stands by the servants'-hall against the dining-room. The schoolboys don't tell tales of each other. They agree not to choose to know who has made the noise, who has broken the window, who has eaten up the pigeons, who has picked all the plover's eggs out of the aspic, how it is that liqueur brandy of Gledstane's is in such porous glass bottles—and so forth. Suppose Brutus had a footman, who came and told him that the butler drank the curaçoa: which of these servants would you dismiss?—the butler, perhaps, but the footman certainly.

No. If your plate and glass are beautifully bright, your bell quickly answered, and Thomas ready, neat, and good-humoured, you are not to expect absolute truth from him. The very obsequiousness and perfection of his service prevents truth. He may be ever so unwell in mind or body, and he must go through his service—

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hand the shining plate, replenish the spotless glass, lay the glittering fork—never laugh when you yourself or your guests joke—be profoundly attentive, and yet look utterly impassive—exchange a few hurried curses at the door with that unseen slavey who ministers without, and with you be perfectly calm and polite. If you are ill, he will come twenty times in an hour to your bell; or leave the girl of his heart—his mother, who is going to America—his dearest friend, who has come to say farewell—his lunch, and his glass of beer just freshly poured out—any or all of these, if the door-bell rings, or the master calls out "THOMAS" from the hall. Do you suppose you can expect absolute candour from a man whom you may order to powder his hair? As between the Reverend Henry Holyshade and his pupil, the idea of entire unreserve is utter bosh: so the truth as between you and Jeames or Thomas, or Mary the housemaid, or Betty the cook, is relative, and not to be demanded on one side or the other. Why, respectful civility is itself a lie, which poor Jeames often has to utter or perform to many a swaggering vulgarian, who should black Jeames's boots, did Jeames wear them and not shoes. There is your little Tom, just ten, ordering the great, large, quiet, orderly young man about—shrieking calls for hot water—bullying Jeames because the boots are not varnished enough, or ordering him to go to the stables, and ask Jenkins why the deuce Tomkins hasn't brought his pony round—or what you will. There is mamma rapping the knuckles of Pincot the lady's-maid, and little Miss scolding Martha, who waits up five pair of stairs in the nursery. Little Miss, Tommy, papa, mamma, you all expect from Martha, from Pincot, from Jenkins, from Jeames, obsequious civility and willing service. My dear good people, you can't have truth too. Suppose you ask for your newspaper, and Jeames says, "I'm reading it, and jest beg not to be disturbed;" or suppose you ask for a can of water, and he remarks, "You great big 'ulking fellar, ain't you big enough to bring it hup yoursulf?" what would your feelings be? Now, if you made similar proposals or requests to Mr. Jones next door, this is the kind of answer Jones would give you. You get truth habitually from equals only; so my good Mr. Holyshade, don't talk to me about the habitual candour of the young Etonian of high birth, or I have my own opinion of *your* candour or discernment when you do. No. Tom Bowling is the soul of honour and has been true to Black-eyed Syousan since the last time they parted at Wapping Old Stairs; but do you suppose Tom is perfectly frank, familiar, and above-board in his conversation with Admiral Nelson, K.C.B.? There are secrets, prevarications, fibs, if you will, between Tom and the Admiral—between your crew and *their* captain. I know I hire a worthy,

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clean, agreeable, and conscientious male or female hypocrite, at so many guineas a year, to do so and so for me. Were he other than hypocrite I would send him about his business. Don't let my displeasure be too fierce with him for a fib or two on his own account.

Some dozen years ago, my family being absent in a distant part of the country, and my business detaining me in London, I remained in my own house with three servants on board wages. I used only to breakfast at home; and future ages will be interested to know that this meal used to consist, at that period, of tea, a penny roll, a pat of butter, and, perhaps, an egg. My weekly bill used invariably to be about fifty shillings; so that as I never dined in the house, you see, my breakfast, consisting of the delicacies before mentioned, cost about seven shillings and threepence per diem. I must, therefore, have consumed daily—

	s.	*d.*
A quarter of a pound of tea (say) . . .	1	3
A penny roll (say)	1	0
One pound of butter (say)	1	3
One pound of lump sugar	1	0
A new-laid egg	2	9

Which is the only possible way in which I can make out the sum.

Well, I fell ill while under this regimen, and had an illness which but for a certain doctor, who was brought to me by a certain kind friend I had in those days, would, I think, have prevented the possibility of my telling this interesting anecdote now a dozen years after. Don't be frightened, my dear madam; it is not a horrid sentimental account of a malady you are coming to—only a question of grocery. This illness, I say, lasted some seventeen days, during which the servants were admirably attentive and kind; and poor John, especially, was up at all hours, watching night after night—amiable, cheerful, untiring, respectful, the very best of Johns and nurses.

Twice or thrice in the seventeen days I may have had a glass of *eau sucrée*—say half-a-dozen glasses of *eau sucrée*—certainly not more. Well, this admirable, watchful, cheerful, tender, affectionate John brought me in a little bill for seventeen pounds of sugar consumed during the illness—"Often 'ad sugar-and-water; always was a-callin' for it," says John, wagging his head quite gravely. You are dead, years and years ago, poor John—so patient, so friendly, so kind, so cheerful to the invalid in the fever. But confess, now, wherever you are, that seventeen pounds of sugar to make six glasses of *eau sucrée* was a *little* too strong, wasn't it,

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John? Ah, how frankly, how trustily, how bravely he lied, poor John! One evening, being at Brighton in the convalescence, I remember John's step was unsteady, his voice thick, his laugh queer—and having some quinine to give me, John brought the glass to me—not to my mouth, but struck me with it pretty smartly in the eye, which was not the way in which Doctor Elliotson had intended his prescription should be taken. Turning that eye upon him, I ventured to hint that my attendant had been drinking. Drinking! I never was more humiliated at the thought of my own injustice than at John's reply. "Drinking! Sulp me! I have had ony an 'alf-pint of beer with my dinner at one o'clock!" and he retreats, holding on by a chair. These are fibs, you see, appertaining to the situation. John is drunk. "*Sulp* him, he has only had an 'alf-pint of beer with his dinner six hours ago:" and none of his fellow-servants will say otherwise. Polly is smuggled on board ship. Who tells the lieutenant when he comes his rounds? Boys are playing cards in the bedroom. The outlying fag announces master coming—out go candles—cards popped into bed—boys sound asleep. Who had that light in the dormitory? Law bless you! the poor dear innocents are every one snoring. Every one snoring, and every snore is a lie told through the nose! Suppose one of your boys or mine is engaged in that awful crime, are we going to break our hearts about it? Come, come. We pull a long face, waggle a grave head, and chuckle within our waistcoats.

Between me and those fellow-creatures of mine who are sitting in the room below, how strange and wonderful is the partition! We meet at every hour of the daylight, and are indebted to each other for a hundred offices of duty and comfort of life; and we live together for years, and don't know each other. John's voice to me is quite different from John's voice when it addresses his mates below. If I met Hannah in the street with a bonnet on, I doubt whether I should know her. And all these good people with whom I may live for years and years, have cares, interests, dear friends and relatives, mayhap schemes, passions, longing hopes, tragedies of their own, from which a carpet and a few planks and beams utterly separate me. When we were at the seaside, and poor Ellen used to look so pale, and run after the postman's bell, and seize a letter in a great scrawling hand, and read it, and cry in a corner, how should we know that the poor little thing's heart was breaking? She fetched the water, and she smoothed the ribbons, and she laid out the dresses, and brought the early cup of tea in the morning just as if she had had no cares to keep her awake. Henry (who lived out of the house) was a servant of a friend of mine, who lived in chambers. There was a dinner one day, and Henry waited all

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through the dinner. The champagne was properly iced, the dinner was excellently served; every guest was attended to; the dinner disappeared; the dessert was set; the claret was in perfect order, carefully decanted, and more ready. And then Henry said, "If you please, sir, may I go home?" He had received word that his house was on fire; and having seen through his dinner, he wished to go and look after his children, and little sticks of furniture. Why, such a man's livery is a uniform of honour. The crest on his button is a badge of bravery.

Do you see—I imagine I do myself—in these little instances, a tinge of humour? Ellen's heart is breaking for handsome Jeames of Buckley Square, whose great legs are kneeling, and who has given a lock of his precious powdered head, to some other than Ellen. Henry is preparing the sauce for his master's wild-ducks while the engines are squirting over his own little nest and brood. Lift these figures up but a story from the basement to the ground-floor, and the fun is gone. We may be *en pleine tragédie*. Ellen may breathe her last sigh in blank verse, calling down blessings upon James the profligate who deserts her. Henry is a hero, and epaulettes are on his shoulders. *Atqui sciebat*, &c.: whatever tortures are in store for him, he will be at his post of duty.

You concede, however, that there is a touch of humour in the two tragedies here mentioned. Why? Is it that the idea of persons in service is somehow ludicrous? Perhaps it is made more so in this country by the splendid appearance of the liveried domestics of great people. When you think that we dress in black ourselves, and put our fellow-creatures in green, pink, or canary-coloured breeches; that we order them to plaster their hair with flour, having brushed that nonsense out of our own heads fifty years ago; that some of the most genteel and stately among us cause the men who drive their carriages to put on little albino wigs, and sit behind great nosegays—I say I suppose it is this heaping of gold lace, gaudy colours, blooming plushes, on honest John Trot, which makes the man absurd in our eyes, who need be nothing but a simple reputable citizen and indoor labourer. Suppose, my dear sir, that you yourself were suddenly desired to put on a full dress, or even undress, domestic uniform with our friend Jones's crest repeated in varied combinations of button on your front and back? Suppose, madam, your son were told, that he could not get out except in lower garments of carnation or amber-coloured plush—would you let him? . . . But, as you justly say, this is not the question, and besides it is a question fraught with danger, sir; and radicalism, sir; and subversion of the very foundations of the social fabric, sir. . . . Well, John, we won't enter on your great domestic ques-

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tion. Don't let us disport with Jeames's dangerous strength, and the edge-tools about his knife-board: but with Betty and Susan who wield the playful mop, and set on the simmering kettle. Surely you have heard Mrs. Toddles talking to Mrs. Doddles about their mutual maids. Miss Susan must have a silk gown, and Miss Betty must wear flowers under her bonnet when she goes to church if you please, and did you ever hear such impudence? The servant in many small establishments is a constant and endless theme of talk. What small wage, sleep, meal, what endless scouring, scolding, tramping on messages fall to that poor Susan's lot; what indignation at the little kindly passing word with the grocer's young man, the pot-boy, the chubby butcher! Where such things will end, my dear Mrs. Toddles, I don't know. What wages they will want next, my dear Mrs. Doddles, &c.

Here, dear ladies, is an advertisement which I cut out of the *Times* a few days since, expressly for you:—

"A LADY is desirous of obtaining a SITUATION for a very respectable young woman as HEAD KITCHEN-MAID under a man-cook. She has lived four years under a very good cook and housekeeper. Can make ice, and is an excellent baker. She will only take a place in a very good family, where she can have the opportunity of improving herself, and, if possible, staying for two years. Apply by letter to," &c. &c.

There, Mrs. Toddles, what do you think of that, and did you ever? Well, no, Mrs. Doddles. Upon my word now, Mrs. T., I don't think I ever did. A respectable young woman—as head kitchen-maid—under a man-cook, will only take a place in a very good family, where she can improve, and stay two years. Just note up the conditions, Mrs. Toddles, mum, if you please, mum, and *then* let us see:—

1. This young woman is to be HEAD kitchen-maid, that is to say, there is to be a chorus of kitchen-maids, of which Y. W. is to be chief.

2. She will only be situated under a man-cook. (A) Ought he to be a French cook; and (B), if so, would the lady desire him to be a Protestant?

3. She will only take a place in a *very good family*. How old ought the family to be, and what do you call good? that is the question. How long after the Conquest will do?

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Would a banker's family do, or is a baronet's good enough? Best say what rank in the peerage would be sufficiently high. But the lady does not say whether she would like a High Church or a Low Church family. Ought there to be unmarried sons, and may they follow a profession? and please say how many daughters; and would the lady like them to be musical? And how many company dinners a week? Not too many, for fear of fatiguing the upper kitchen-maid; but sufficient, so as to keep the upper kitchen-maid's hand in. [N.B.—I think I can see a rather bewildered expression on the countenances of Mesdames Doddles and Toddles as I am prattling on in this easy bantering way.]

4. The head kitchen-maid wishes to stay for two years, and improve herself under the man-cook, and having of course sucked the brains (as the phrase is) from under the chef's nightcap, then the head kitchen-maid wishes to go.

And upon my word, Mrs. Toddles, mum, I will go and fetch the cab for her. The cab? Why not her Ladyship's own carriage and pair, and the head coachman to drive away the head kitchen-maid? You see she stipulates for everything—the time to come; the time to stay; the family she will be with; and as soon as she has improved herself enough, of course the upper kitchen maid will step into the carriage and drive off.

Well, upon my word and conscience, if things are coming to *this* pass, Mrs. Toddles and Mrs. Doddles, mum, I think I will go upstairs and get a basin and a sponge, and then downstairs and get some hot water; and then I will go and scrub the chalk-mark off my own door with my own hands.

It is wiped off, I declare! After ever so many weeks! Who has done it? It was just a little roundabout mark, you know, and it was there for days and weeks, before I ever thought it would be the text of a Roundabout Paper.

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ON BEING FOUND OUT

AT the close (let us say) of Queen Anne's reign, when I was a boy at a private and preparatory school for young gentlemen, I remember the wiseacre of a master ordering us all, one night, to march into a little garden at the back of the house, and thence to proceed one by one into a tool- or hen-house (I was but a tender little thing just put into short clothes, and can't exactly say whether the house was for tools or hens), and in that house to put our hands into a sack which stood on a bench, a candle burning beside it. I put my hand into the sack. My hand came out quite black. I went and joined the other boys in the schoolroom; and all their hands were black too.

By reason of my tender age (and there are some critics who, I hope, will be satisfied by my acknowledging that I am a hundred and fifty-six next birthday) I could not understand what was the meaning of this night excursion—this candle, this tool-house, this bag of soot. I think we little boys were taken out of our sleep to be brought to the ordeal. We came, then, and showed our little hands to the master; washed them or not—most probably, I should say, not—and so went bewildered back to bed.

Something had been stolen in the school that day; and Mr. Wiseacre having read in a book of an ingenious method of finding out a thief by making him put his hand into a sack (which, if guilty, the rogue would shirk from doing), all we boys were subjected to the trial. Goodness knows what the lost object was, or who stole it. We all had black hands to show to the master. And the thief, whoever he was, was not Found Out that time.

I wonder if the rascal is alive—an elderly scoundrel he must be by this time; and a hoary old hypocrite, to whom an old schoolfellow presents his kindest regards—parenthetically remarking what a dreadful place that private school was: cold, chilblains, bad dinners, not enough victuals, and caning awful!—Are you alive still, I say, you nameless villain, who escaped discovery on that day of crime? I hope you have escaped often since, old sinner. Ah, what a lucky thing it is, for you and me, my man, that we

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are *not* found out in all our peccadilloes; and that our backs can slip away from the master and the cane!

Just consider what life would be, if every rogue was found out, and flogged *coram populo!* What a butchery, what an indecency, what an endless swishing of the rod! Don't cry out about my misanthropy. My good friend Mealymouth, I will trouble you to tell me, do you go to church? When there, do you say, or do you not, that you are a miserable sinner? and saying so, do you believe or disbelieve it? If you are a M. S., don't you deserve correction, and aren't you grateful if you are to be let off? I say again, what a blessed thing it is that we are not all found out!

Just picture to yourself everybody who does wrong being found out, and punished accordingly. Fancy all the boys in all the school being whipped; and then the assistants, and then the headmaster (Doctor Badford let us call him). Fancy the provost-marshal being tied up, having previously superintended the correction of the whole army. After the young gentlemen have had their turn for the faulty exercises, fancy Doctor Lincolnsinn being taken up for certain faults in *his* Essay and Review. After the clergyman has cried his peccavi, suppose we hoist up a Bishop, and give him a couple of dozen! (I see my Lord Bishop of Double-Gloucester sitting in a very uneasy posture on his right reverend bench.) After we have cast off the Bishop, what are we to say to the Minister who appointed him? My Lord Cinqwarden, it is painful to have to use personal correction to a boy of your age; but really . . . *Siste tandem, carnifex!* The butchery is too horrible. The hand drops powerless, appalled at the quantity of birch which it must cut and brandish. I am glad we are not all found out, I say again; and protest, my dear brethren, against our having our deserts.

To fancy all men found out and punished is bad enough; but imagine all women found out in the distinguished social circle in which you and I have the honour to move. Is it not a mercy that so many of these fair criminals remain unpunished and undiscovered? There is Mrs. Longbow, who is for ever practising, and who shoots poisoned arrows, too; when you meet her you don't call her liar, and charge her with the wickedness she has done, and is doing. There is Mrs. Painter, who passes for a most respectable woman, and a model in society. There is no use in saying what you really know regarding her and her goings on. There is Diana Hunter—what a little haughty prude it is; and yet *we* know stories about her which are not altogether edifying. I say it is best, for the sake of the good, that the bad should not all be found out. You don't want your children to know the history of that lady in the next box, who is so handsome, and

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whom they admire so. Ah me! what would life be if we were all found out, and punished for all our faults? Jack Ketch would be in permanence; and then who would hang Jack Ketch?

They talk of murderers being pretty certainly found out. Psha! I have heard an authority awfully competent vow and declare that scores and hundreds of murders are committed, and nobody is the wiser. That terrible man mentioned one or two ways of committing murder, which he maintained were quite common, and were scarcely ever found out. A man, for instance, comes home to his wife, and . . . but I pause—I know that this Magazine * has a very large circulation. Hundreds and hundreds of thousands—why not say a million of people at once?—well, say a million read it. And amongst these countless readers, I might be teaching some monster how to make away with his wife without being found out, some fiend of a woman how to destroy her dear husband. I will *not* then tell this easy and simple way of murder, as communicated to me by a most respectable party in the confidence of private intercourse. Suppose some gentle reader were to try this most simple and easy receipt—it seems to me almost infallible—and come to grief in consequence, and be found out and hanged? Should I ever pardon myself for having been the means of doing injury to a single one of our esteemed subscribers? The prescription whereof I speak—that is to say, whereof I *don't* speak—shall be buried in this bosom. No, I am a humane man. I am not one of your Bluebeards to go and say to my wife, "My dear! I am going away for a few days to Brighton. Here are all the keys of the house. You may open every door and closet, except the one at the end of the oak-room opposite the fireplace, with the little bronze Shakspeare on the mantelpiece (or what not)." I don't say this to a woman—unless, to be sure, I want to get rid of her—because, after such a caution, I know she'll peep into the closet. I say nothing about the closet at all. I keep the key in my pocket, and a being whom I love, but who, as I know, has many weaknesses, out of harm's way. You toss up your head, dear angel, drub on the ground with your lovely little feet, on the table with your sweet rosy fingers, and cry, "Oh, sneerer! You don't know the depth of woman's feeling, the lofty scorn of all deceit, the entire absence of mean curiosity in the sex, or never, never would you libel us so!" Ah, Delia! dear dear Delia! It is because I fancy I *do* know something about you (not all, mind—no, no; no man knows that)—Ah, my bride, my ringdove, my rose, my poppet—choose, in fact, whatever name you like—bulbul of my grove, fountain of my desert, sunshine of

* The *Cornhill Magazine*.

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my darkling life, and joy of my dungeoned existence, it is because I *do* know a little about you that I conclude to say nothing of that private closet, and keep my key in my pocket. You take away that closet-key then, and the house-key. You lock Delia in. You keep her out of harm's way and gadding, and so she never *can* be found out.

And yet by little strange accidents and coincidences how we are being found out every day. You remember that old story of the Abbé Kakatoes, who told the company at supper one night how the first confession he ever received was—from a murderer let us say. Presently enters to supper the Marquis de Croquemitaine. "Palsambleu, abbé!" says the brilliant Marquis, taking a pinch of snuff, "are you here? Gentlemen and ladies! I was the abbé's first penitent, and I made him a confession which I promise you astonished him."

To be sure how queerly things are found out! Here is an instance. Only the other day I was writing in these Roundabout Papers about a certain man, whom I facetiously called Baggs, and who had abused me to my friends, who of course told me. Shortly after that paper was published another friend—Sacks let us call him—scowls fiercely at me as I am sitting in perfect good-humour at the club, and passes on without speaking. A cut. A quarrel. Sacks thinks it is about him that I was writing: whereas, upon my honour and conscience, I never had him once in my mind, and was pointing my moral from quite another man. But don't you see, by this wrath of the guilty-conscienced Sacks, that he had been abusing me too? He has owned himself guilty, never having been accused. He has winced when nobody thought of hitting him. I did but put the cap out, and madly butting and chafing, behold my friend rushes to put his head into it! Never mind, Sacks, you are found out; but I bear you no malice, my man.

And yet to be found out, I know from my own experience, must be painful and odious, and cruelly mortifying to the inward vanity. Suppose I am a poltroon, let us say. With fierce moustache, loud talk, plentiful oaths, and an immense stick, I keep up nevertheless a character for courage. I swear fearfully at cabmen and women; brandish my bludgeon, and perhaps knock down a little man or two with it: brag of the images which I break at the shooting-gallery, and pass amongst my friends for a whiskery fire-eater, afraid of neither man nor dragon. Ah me! Suppose some brisk little chap steps up and gives me a caning in St. James's Street, with all the heads of my friends looking out of all the club windows. My reputation is gone. I frighten no man more. My nose is pulled by whipper-snappers, who jump up on a chair to

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reach it. I am found out. And in the days of my triumphs, when people were yet afraid of me, and were taken in by my swagger, I always knew that I was a lily-liver, and expected that I should be found out some day.

That certainty of being found out must haunt and depress many a bold braggadocio spirit. Let us say it is a clergyman, who can pump copious floods of tears out of his own eyes and those of his audience. He thinks to himself, "I am but a poor swindling chattering rogue. My bills are unpaid. I have jilted several women whom I have promised to marry. I don't know whether I believe what I preach, and I know I have stolen the very sermon over which I have been snivelling. Have they found me out?" says he, as his head drops down on the cushion.

Then your writer, poet, historian, novelist, or what not? The *Beacon* says that "Jones's work is one of the first order." The *Lamp* declares that "Jones's tragedy surpasses every work since the days of Him of Avon." The *Comet* asserts that "J.'s 'Life of Goody Two-Shoes' is a κτῆμα ἐς ἀεὶ, a noble and enduring monument to the fame of that admirable Englishwoman," and so forth. But then Jones knows that he has lent the critic of the *Beacon* five pounds; that his publisher has a half-share in the *Lamp;* and that the *Comet* comes repeatedly to dine with him. It is all very well. Jones is immortal until he is found out; and then down comes the extinguisher, and the immortal is dead and buried. The idea (*dies iræ!*) of discovery must haunt many a man, and make him uneasy, as the trumpets are puffing in his triumph. Brown, who has a higher place than he deserves, cowers before Smith, who has found him out. What is a chorus of critics shouting "Bravo"? —a public clapping hands and flinging garlands? Brown knows that Smith has found him out. Puff, trumpets! Wave, banners! Huzza, boys, for the immortal Brown! "This is all very well," B. thinks (bowing the while, smiling, laying his hand to his heart); "but there stands Smith at the window: *he* has measured me; and some day the others will find me out too." It is a very curious sensation to sit by a man who has found you out, and who you know has found you out; or *vice versâ*, to sit with a man whom *you* have found out. His talent? Bah! His virtue? We know a little story or two about his virtue, and he knows we know it. We are thinking over friend Robinson's antecedents, as we grin, bow, and talk; and we are both humbugs together. Robinson a good fellow, is he? You know how he behaved to Hicks? A good-natured man, is he? Pray do you remember that little story of Mrs. Robinson's black eye? How men have to work, to talk, to smile, to go to bed, and try to sleep, with this dread of being found

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out on their consciences! Bardolph, who has robbed a church, and Nym, who has taken a purse, go to their usual haunts, and smoke their pipes with their companions. Mr. Detective Bullseye appears, and says, "Oh, Bardolph, I want you about that there pyx business!" Mr. Bardolph knocks the ashes out of his pipe, puts out his hands to the little steel cuffs, and walks away quite meekly. He is found out. He must go. "Good-bye, Doll Tearsheet! Good-bye, Mrs. Quickly, ma'am!" The other gentlemen and ladies *de la société* look on and exchange mute adieux with the departing friends. And an assured time will come when the other gentlemen and ladies will be found out too.

What a wonderful and beautiful provision of nature it has been that, for the most part, our womankind are not endowed with the faculty of finding us out! *They* don't doubt, and probe, and weigh, and take your measure. Lay down this paper, my benevolent friend and reader, go into your drawing-room now, and utter a joke ever so old, and I wager sixpence the ladies there will all begin to laugh. Go to Brown's house, and tell Mrs. Brown and the young ladies what you think of him, and see what a welcome you will get! In like manner, let him come to your house, and tell *your* good lady his candid opinion of you, and fancy how she will receive him! Would you have your wife and children know you exactly for what you are, and esteem you precisely at your worth? If so, my friend, you will live in a dreary house, and you will have but a chilly fireside. Do you suppose the people round it don't see your homely face as under a glamour, and, as it were, with a halo of love round it? You don't fancy you *are*, as you seem to them? No such thing, my man. Put away that monstrous conceit, and be thankful that *they* have not found you out.

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ON A HUNDRED YEARS HENCE

WHERE have I just read of a game played at a country house? The party assembles round a table with pens, ink, and paper. Some one narrates a tale containing more or less incidents and personages. Each person of the company then writes down, to the best of his memory and ability, the anecdote just narrated, and finally the papers are to be read out. I do not say I should like to play often at this game, which might possibly be a tedious and lengthy pastime, not by any means so amusing as smoking a cigar in the conservatory; or even listening to the young ladies playing their piano-pieces; or to Hobbs and Nobbs lingering round the bottle and talking over the morning's run with the hounds; but surely it is a moral and ingenious sport. They say the variety of narratives is often very odd and amusing. The original story becomes so changed and distorted that at the end of all the statements you are puzzled to know where the truth is at all. As time is of small importance to the cheerful persons engaged in this sport, perhaps a good way of playing it would be to spread it over a couple of years. Let the people who played the game in '60 all meet and play it once more in '61, and each write his story over again. Then bring out your original and compare notes. Not only will the stories differ from each other, but the writers will probably differ from themselves. In the course of the year the incidents will grow or will dwindle strangely. The least authentic of the statements will be so lively or so malicious, or so neatly put, that it will appear most like the truth. I like these tales and sportive exercises. I had begun a little print collection once. I had Addison in his nightgown in bed at Holland House, requesting young Lord Warwick to remark how a Christian should die. I had Cambronne clutching his cocked-hat, and uttering the immortal "La Garde meurt et ne se rend pas." I had the *Vengeur* going down, and all the crew hurraying like madmen. I had Alfred toasting the muffin; Curtius (Haydon) jumping into the gulf; with extracts from Napoleon's bulletins, and a fine authentic portrait of Baron Munchausen.

What man who has been before the public at all has not heard

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similar wonderful anecdotes regarding himself and his own history? In these humble essaykins I have taken leave to egotise. I cry out about the shoes which pinch me, and, as I fancy, more naturally and pathetically than if my neighbour's corns were trodden under foot. I prattle about the dish which I love, the wine which I like, the talk I heard yesterday—about Brown's absurd airs—Jones's ridiculous elation when he thinks he has caught me in a blunder (a part of the fun, you see, is that Jones will read this, and will perfectly well know that I mean him, and that we shall meet and grin at each other with entire politeness). This is not the highest kind of speculation, I confess, but it is a gossip which amuses some folks. A brisk and honest small-beer, will refresh those who do not care for the frothy outpourings of heavier taps. A two of clubs may be a good handy little card sometimes, and able to tackle a king of diamonds, if it is a little trump. Some philosophers get their wisdom with deep thought, and out of ponderous libraries; I pick up my small crumbs of cogitation at a dinner-table; or from Mrs. Mary and Miss Louisa, as they are prattling over their five-o'clock tea.

Well, yesterday at dinner, Jucundus was good enough to tell me a story about myself, which he had heard from a lady of his acquaintance, to whom I send my best compliments. The tale is this. At nine o'clock on the evening of the 31st of November last, just before sunset, I was seen leaving No. 96 Abbey Road, St. John's Wood, leading two little children by the hand, one of them in a nankeen pelisse, and the other having a mole on the third finger of his left hand (she thinks it was the third finger, but is quite sure it was the left hand). Thence I walked with them to Charles Boroughbridge's, pork and sausage man, No. 29 Upper Theresa Road. Here, whilst I left the little girl innocently eating a polony in the front shop, I and Boroughbridge retired with the boy into the back parlour, where Mrs. Boroughbridge was playing cribbage. She put up the cards and boxes, took out a chopper and a napkin, and we cut the little boy's little throat (which he bore with great pluck and resolution), and made him into sausage-meat by the aid of Purkis's excellent sausage-machine. The little girl at first could not understand her brother's absence, but, under the pretence of taking her to see Mr. Fechter in *Hamlet*, I led her down to the New River at Sadler's Wells, where a body of a child in a nankeen pelisse was subsequently found, and has never been recognised to the present day. And this Mrs. Lynx can aver, because she saw the whole transaction with her own eyes, as she told Mr. Jucundus.

I have altered the little details of the anecdote somewhat. But

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this story is, I vow and declare, as true as Mrs. Lynx's. Gracious goodness! how do lies begin? What are the averages of lying? Is the same amount of lies told about every man, and do we pretty much all tell the same amount of lies? Is the average greater in Ireland than in Scotland, or *vice versâ*—among women than among men? Is this a lie I am telling now? If I am talking about you, the odds are, perhaps, that it is. I look back at some which have been told about me, and speculate on them with thanks and wonder. Dear friends have told them of me, have told them to me of myself. Have they not to and of you, dear friend? A friend of mine was dining at a large dinner of clergymen, and a story, as true as the sausage story above given, was told regarding me, by one of those reverend divines in whose frocks sit some anile chatterboxes, as any man who knows this world knows. They take the privilege of their gown. They cabal, and tattle, and hiss, and cackle comminations under their breath. I say the old women of the other sex are not more talkative or more mischievous than some of these. "Such a man ought not to be spoken to," says Gobemouche, narrating the story—and such a story! "And I am surprised he is admitted into society at all." Yes, dear Gobemouche, but the story wasn't true; and I had no more done the wicked deed in question than I had run away with the Queen of Sheba.

I have always longed to know what that story was (or what collection of histories), which a lady had in her mind to whom a servant of mine applied for a place, when I was breaking up my establishment once, and going abroad. Brown went with a very good character from us, which, indeed, she fully deserved after several years' faithful service. But when Mrs. Jones read the name of the person out of whose employment Brown came, "That is quite sufficient," says Mrs. Jones. "You may go. I will never take a servant out of *that* house." Ah, Mrs. Jones, how I should like to know what that crime was, or what that series of villanies, which made you determine never to take a servant out of my house. Do you believe in the story of the little boy and the sausages? Have you swallowed that little minced infant? Have you devoured that young Polonius? Upon my word you have maw enough. We somehow greedily gobble down all stories in which the characters of our friends are chopped up, and believe wrong of them without inquiry. In a late serial work written by this hand, I remember making some pathetic remarks about our propensity to believe ill of our neighbours—and I remember the remarks, not because they were valuable, or novel, or ingenious, but because, within three days after they had appeared in print, the moralist who wrote them, walking home with a friend, heard a story about another

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friend, which story he straightway believed, and which story was scarcely more true than that sausage fable which is here set down. *O mea culpa, mea maxima culpa!* But though the preacher trips, shall not the doctrine be good? Yea, brethren! Here be the rods. Look you, here are the scourges. Choose me a nice long, swishing, buddy one, light and well poised in the handle, thick and bushy at the tail. Pick me out a whip-cord thong with some dainty knots in it—and now—we all deserve it—whish, whish, whish! Let us cut into each other all round.

A favourite liar and servant of mine was a man I once had to drive a brougham. He never came to my house, except for orders, and once when he helped to wait at dinner, so clumsily that it was agreed we would dispense with his further efforts. The (job) brougham horse used to look dreadfully lean and tired, and the livery-stable keeper complained that we worked him too hard. Now, it turned out that there was a neighbouring butcher's lady who liked to ride in a brougham; and Tomkins lent her ours, drove her cheerfully to Richmond and Putney, and, I suppose, took out a payment in mutton-chops. We gave this good Tomkins wine and medicine for his family when sick—we supplied him with little comforts and extras which need not now be remembered—and the grateful creature rewarded us by informing some of our tradesmen whom he honoured with his custom, "Mr. Roundabout? Lor' bless you! I carry him up to bed drunk every night in the week." He, Tomkins, being a man of seven stone weight and five feet high; whereas his employer was—but here modesty interferes, and I decline to enter into the avoirdupois question.

Now, what was Tomkins's motive for the utterance and dissemination of these lies? They could further no conceivable end or interest of his own. Had they been true stories, Tomkins's master would, and reasonably, have been still more angry than at the fables. It was but suicidal slander on the part of Tomkins—must come to a discovery—must end in a punishment. The poor wretch had got his place under, as it turned out, a fictitious character. He might have stayed in it, for of course Tomkins had a wife and poor innocent children. He might have had bread, beer, bed, character, coats, coals. He might have nestled in our little island, comfortably sheltered from the storms of life; but we were compelled to cast him out, and send him driving, lonely, perishing, tossing, starving, to sea—to drown. To drown? There be other modes of death whereby rogues die. Good-bye, Tomkins. And so the nightcap is put on, and the bolt is drawn for poor T.

Suppose we were to invite volunteers amongst our respected readers to send in little statements of the lies which they know

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have been told about themselves: what a heap of correspondence, what an exaggeration of malignities, what a crackling bonfire of incendiary falsehoods, might we not gather together! And a lie once set going, having the breath of life breathed into it by the father of lying, and ordered to run its diabolical little course, lives with a prodigious vitality. You say, "Magna est veritas et prævalebit." Psha! Great lies are as great as great truths, and prevail constantly, and day after day. Take an instance or two out of my own little budget. I sit near a gentleman at dinner, and the conversation turns upon a certain anonymous literary performance which at the time is amusing the town. "Oh," says the gentleman, "everybody knows who wrote that paper: it is Momus's." I was a young author at the time, perhaps proud of my bantling: "I beg your pardon," I say, "it was written by your humble servant." "Indeed!" was all that the man replied, and he shrugged his shoulders, turned his back, and talked to his other neighbour. I never heard sarcastic incredulity more finely conveyed than by that "indeed." "Impudent liar," the gentleman's face said, as clear as face could speak. Where was Magna Veritas, and how did she prevail then? She lifted up her voice, she made her appeal, and she was kicked out of court. In New York I read a newspaper criticism one day (by an exile from our shores who has taken up his abode in the Western Republic), commenting upon a letter of mine which had appeared in a contemporary volume, and wherein it was stated that the writer was a lad in such and such a year, and in point of fact, I was, at the period spoken of, nineteen years of age. "Falsehood, Mr. Roundabout," says the noble critic: "you were then not a lad; you were then six-and-twenty years of age." You see he knew better than papa and mamma and parish register. It was easier for him to think and say I lied, on a twopenny matter connected with my own affairs, than to imagine he was mistaken. Years ago, in a time when we were very mad wags, Arcturus and myself met a gentleman from China who knew the language. We began to speak Chinese against him. We said we were born in China. We were two to one. We spoke the mandarin dialect with perfect fluency. We had the company with us; as in the old old days, the squeak of the real pig was voted not to be so natural as the squeak of the sham pig. O Arcturus, the sham pig squeaks in our streets now to the applause of multitudes, and the real porker grunts unheeded in his sty!

I once talked for some little time with an amiable lady: it was for the first time; and I saw an expression of surprise on her kind face which said as plainly as face could say, "Sir, do you know that up to this moment I have had a certain opinion of you, and that I

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begin to think I have been mistaken or misled?" I not only know that she had heard evil reports of me, but I know who told her—one of those acute fellows, my dear brethren, of whom we spoke in a previous sermon, who has found me out—found out actions which I never did, found out thoughts and sayings which I never spoke, and judged me accordingly. Ah, my lad! have I found *you* out? *O, risum teneatis.* Perhaps the person I am accusing is no more guilty than I.

How comes it that the evil which men say spreads so widely and lasts so long, whilst our good kind words don't seem somehow to take root and bear blossom? Is it that in the stony hearts of mankind these pretty flowers can't find a place to grow? Certain it is that scandal is good brisk talk, whereas praise of one's neighbour is by no means lively hearing. An acquaintance grilled, scored, devilled, and served with mustard and cayenne pepper excites the appetite; whereas a slice of cold friend with currant jelly is but a sickly unrelishing meat.

Now, such being the case, my dear worthy Mrs. Candour, in whom I know there are a hundred good and generous qualities: it being perfectly clear that the good things which we say of our neighbours don't fructify, but somehow perish in the ground where they are dropped, whilst the evil words are wafted by all the winds of scandal, take root in all soils, and flourish amazingly—seeing, I say, that this conversation does not give us a fair chance, suppose we give up censoriousness altogether, and decline uttering our opinions about Brown, Jones, and Robinson (and Mesdames B., J., and R.) at all. We may be mistaken about every one of them, as, please goodness, those anecdote-mongers against whom I have uttered my meek protest have been mistaken about me. We need not go to the extent of saying that Mrs. Manning was an amiable creature much misunderstood; and Jack Thurtell a gallant unfortunate fellow, not near so black as he was painted; but we will try and avoid personalities altogether in talk, won't we? We will range the fields of science, dear madam, and communicate to each other the pleasing results of our studies. We will, if you please, examine the infinitesimal wonders of nature through the microscope. We will cultivate entomology. We will sit with our arms round each other's waists on the *pons asinorum*, and see the stream of mathematics flow beneath. We will take refuge in cards, and play at "beggar my neighbour," not abuse my neighbour. We will go to the Zoological Gardens and talk freely about the gorilla and his kindred, but not talk about people who can talk in their turn. Suppose we praise the High Church? we offend the Low Church. The Broad Church? High and Low are both offended. What do

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you think of Lord Derby as a politician? And what is your opinion of Lord Palmerston? If you please, will you play me those lovely variations of "In a cottage near a wood"? It is a charming air (you know it in French, I suppose? *Ah! te dirai-je, maman?*) and was a favourite with poor Marie Antoinette. I say "poor," because I have a right to speak with pity of a sovereign who was renowned for so much beauty and so much misfortune. But as for giving any opinion on her conduct, saying that she was good or bad, or indifferent, goodness forbid! We have agreed we will not be censorious. Let us have a game at cards—at *écarté*, if you please. You deal. I ask for cards. I lead the deuce of clubs. . . .

What? there is no deuce! Deuce take it! What? People *will* go on talking about their neighbours, and won't have their mouths stopped by cards, or ever so much microscopes and aquariums? Ah, my poor dear Mrs. Candour, I agree with you. By the way, did you ever see anything like Lady Godiva Trotter's dress last night? People *will* go on chattering, although we hold our tongues; and, after all, my good soul, what will their scandal matter a hundred years hence?

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SMALL-BEER CHRONICLE

NOT long since, at a certain banquet, I had the good fortune to sit by Doctor Polymathesis, who knows everything, and who, about the time when the claret made its appearance, mentioned that old dictum of the grumbling Oxford don, that "ALL CLARET *would be port if it could!*" Imbibing a bumper of one or the other not ungratefully, I thought to myself, "Here, surely, Mr. Roundabout, is a good text for one of your reverence's sermons." Let us apply to the human race, dear brethren, what is here said of the vintages of Portugal and Gascony, and we shall have no difficulty in perceiving how many clarets aspire to be ports in their way; how most men and women of our acquaintance, how we ourselves, are Aquitainians giving ourselves Lusitanian airs; how we wish to have credit for being stronger, braver, more beautiful, more worthy than we really are.

Nay, the beginning of this hypocrisy—a desire to excel, a desire to be hearty, fruity, generous, strength-imparting—is a virtuous and noble ambition; and it is most difficult for a man in his own case, or his neighbour's, to say at what point this ambition transgresses the boundary of virtue, and becomes vanity, pretence, and self-seeking. You are a poor man, let us say, showing a bold face to adverse fortune, and wearing a confident aspect. Your purse is very narrow, but you owe no man a penny; your means are scanty, but your wife's gown is decent; your old coat well brushed; your children at a good school; you grumble to no one; ask favours of no one; truckle to no neighbours on account of their superior rank, or (a worse, and a meaner and a more common crime still) envy none for their better fortune. To all outward appearances you are as well to do as your neighbours, who have thrice your income. There may be in this case some little mixture of pretension in your life and behaviour. You certainly *do* put on a smiling face whilst fortune is pinching you. Your wife and girls, so smart and neat at evening parties, are cutting, patching, and cobbling all day to make both ends of life's haberdashery meet. You give a friend a bottle of wine on occasion, but are content yourself with a glass of whisky

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and-water. You avoid a cab, saying that of all things you like to walk home after dinner (which you know, my good friend, is a fib). I grant you that in this scheme of life there does enter ever so little hypocrisy; that this claret is loaded, as it were; but your desire to *portify* yourself is amiable, is pardonable, is perhaps honourable: and were there no other hypocrisies than yours in the world we should be a set of worthy fellows; and sermonisers, moralisers, satirisers would have to hold their tongues and go to some other trade to get a living.

But you know you *will* step over that boundary line of virtue and modesty, into the district where humbug and vanity begin, and there the moraliser catches you and makes an example of you. For instance, in a certain novel in another place my friend Mr. Talbot Twysden is mentioned—a man whom you and I know to be a wretched ordinaire, but who persists in treating himself as if he was the finest '20 port. In our Britain there are hundreds of men like him; for ever striving to swell beyond their natural size, to strain beyond their natural strength, to step beyond their natural stride. Search, search within your own waistcoats, dear brethren—*you* know in your hearts which of your ordinaire qualities you would pass off, and fain consider as first-rate port. And why not you yourself, Mr. Preacher? says the congregation. Dearly beloved, neither in nor out of this pulpit do I profess to be bigger, or cleverer, or wiser, or better than any of you. A short while since, a certain Reviewer announced that I gave myself great pretensions as a philosopher. I a philosopher! I advance pretensions! My dear Saturday friend, And you? Don't you teach everything to everybody? and punish the naughty boys if they don't learn as you bid them? You teach politics to Lord John and Mr. Gladstone. You teach poets how to write; painters, how to paint; gentlemen, manners; and opera-dancers, how to pirouette. I was not a little amused of late by an instance of the modesty of our Saturday friend, who, more Athenian than the Athenians, and *à propos* of a Greek book by a Greek author, sat down and gravely showed the Greek gentleman how to write his own language.

No, I do not, as far as I know, try to be port at all; but offer in these presents, a sound genuine ordinaire, at 18s. per doz. let us say, grown on my own hillside, and offered *de bon cœur* to those who will sit down under my *tonnelle*, and have a half-hour's drink and gossip. It is none of your hot porto, my friend. I know there is much better and stronger liquor elsewhere. Some pronounce it sour; some say it is thin; some that it has woefully lost its flavour. This may or may not be true. There are good and bad years; years that surprise everybody; years of which the

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produce is small and bad, or rich and plentiful. But if my tap is not genuine it is naught, and no man should give himself the trouble to drink it. I do not even say that I would be port if I could; knowing that port (by which I would imply much stronger, deeper, richer, and more durable liquor than my vineyard can furnish) is not relished by all palates, or suitable to all heads. We will assume then, dear brother, that you and I are tolerably modest people; and, ourselves being thus out of the question, proceed to show how pretentious our neighbours are, and how very many of them would be port if they could.

Have you never seen a small man from college placed amongst great folk, and giving himself the airs of a man of fashion? He goes back to his common room with fond reminiscences of Ermine Castle or Strawberry Hall. He writes to the dear Countess, to say that dear Lord Lollypop is getting on very well at Saint Boniface, and that the accident which he met with in a scuffle with an inebriated bargeman only showed his spirit and honour, and will not permanently disfigure his Lordship's nose. He gets his clothes from dear Lollypop's London tailor, and wears a mauve or magenta tie when he rides out to see the hounds. A love of fashionable people is a weakness, I do not say of all, but of some tutors. Witness that Eton tutor t'other day, who intimated that in Cornhill we could not understand the perfect purity, delicacy, and refinement of those genteel families who sent their sons to Eton. O usher, *mon ami!* Old Sam Johnson, who, too, had been an usher in his early life, kept a little of that weakness always. Suppose Goldsmith had knocked him up at three in the morning and proposed a boat to Greenwich, as Topham Beauclerc and his friend did, would he have said, "What, my boy, are you for a frolic? I'm with you!" and gone and put on his clothes? Rather he would have pitched poor Goldsmith downstairs. He would have liked to be port if he could. Of course *we* wouldn't. Our opinion of the Portugal grape is known. It grows very high, and is very sour, and we don't go for that kind of grape at all.

"I was walking with Mr. Fox"—and sure this anecdote comes very pat after the grapes—"I was walking with Mr. Fox in the Louvre," says Benjamin West (*apud* some paper I have just been reading), "and I remarked how many people turned round to look at *me*. This shows the respect of the French for the fine arts." This is a curious instance of a very small claret indeed, which imagined itself to be port of the strongest body. There are not many instances of a faith so deep, so simple, so satisfactory as this. I have met many who would like to be port; but with few of the Gascon sort, who absolutely believed they *were* port. George III.

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believed in West's port, and thought Reynolds's overrated stuff. When I saw West's pictures at Philadelphia, I looked at them with astonishment and awe. Hide, blushing glory, hide your head under your old nightcap. O immortality! is this the end of you? Did any of you, my dear brethren, ever try and read "Blackmore's Poems," or the "Epics of Baour-Lormian," or the "Henriade," or—what shall we say?—Pollok's "Course of Time"? They were thought to be more lasting than brass by some people, and where are they now? And *our* masterpieces of literature—*our* ports—that, if not immortal, at any rate are to last their fifty, their hundred years—oh, sirs, don't you think a very small cellar will hold them?

Those poor people in brass, on pedestals, hectoring about Trafalgar Square and that neighbourhood, don't you think many of them—apart even from the ridiculous execution—cut rather a ridiculous figure, and that we are too eager to set up our ordinaire heroism and talent for port? A Duke of Wellington or two I will grant, though even of these idols a moderate supply will be sufficient. Some years ago a famous and witty French critic was in London, with whom I walked the streets. I am ashamed to say that I informed him (being in hopes that he was about to write some papers regarding the manners and customs of this country) that all the statues he saw represented the Duke of Wellington. That on the arch opposite Apsley House? the Duke in a cloak, and cocked-hat, on horseback. That behind Apsley House in an airy fig-leaf costume? the Duke again. That in Cockspur Street? the Duke with a pig-tail—and so on. I showed him an army of Dukes. There are many bronze heroes who after a few years look already as foolish, awkward, and out of place as a man, say at Shoolbred's or Swan & Edgar's. For example, those three Grenadiers in Pall Mall, who have been up only a few months, don't you pity those unhappy household troops, who have to stand frowning and looking fierce there; and think they would like to step down and go to barracks? That they fought very bravely there is no doubt; but so did the Russians fight very bravely; and the French fight very bravely; and so did Colonel Jones and the 99th, and Colonel Brown and the 100th; and I say again that ordinaire should not give itself port airs, and that an honest ordinaire would blush to be found swaggering so. I am sure if you could consult the Duke of York, who is impaled on his column between the two clubs, and ask his late Royal Highness whether he thought he ought to remain there, he would say no. A brave worthy man, not a braggart or boaster, to be put upon that heroic perch must be painful to him. Lord George Bentinck, I suppose,

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being in the midst of the family park in Cavendish Square, may conceive that he has a right to remain in his place. But look at William of Cumberland, with his hat cocked over his eye, prancing behind Lord George on his Roman-nosed charger: he, depend on it, would be for getting off his horse if he had the permission. He did not hesitate about trifles, as we know; but he was a very truth-telling and honourable soldier; and as for heroic rank and statuesque dignity, I would wager a dozen of '20 Port against a bottle of pure and sound Bordeaux, at 18s. per dozen (bottles included), that he never would think of claiming any such absurd distinction. They have got a statue of Thomas Moore at Dublin, I hear. Is he on horseback? Some men should have, say, a fifty years' lease of glory. After a while some gentlemen now in brass should go to the melting furnace, and reappear in some other gentleman's shape. Lately I saw that Melville column rising over Edinburgh; come, good men and true, don't you feel a little awkward and uneasy when you walk under it? Who was this to stand in heroic places? and is yon the man whom Scotchmen most delight to honour? I must own deferentially that there is a tendency in North Britain to over-esteem its heroes. Scotch ale is very good and strong, but it is not stronger than all the other beer in the world, as some Scottish patriots would insist. When there has been a war, and stout old Sandy Sansculotte returns home from India or the Crimea, what a bagpiping, shouting, hurraying, and self-glorification takes place round about him! You would fancy, to hear McOrator after dinner, that the Scotch had fought all the battles, killed all the Russians, Indian rebels, or what not. In Cupar-Fife, there's a little inn called the "Battle of Waterloo," and what do you think the sign is? (I speak from memory, to be sure.) "The Battle of Waterloo" is one broad Scotchman laying about him with a broad-sword. Yes, yes, my dear Mac, you are wise, you are good, you are clever, you are handsome, you are brave, you are rich, &c.; but so is Jones over the border. Scotch salmon is good, but there are other good fish in the sea. I once heard a Scotchman lecture on poetry in London. Of course the pieces he selected were chiefly by Scottish authors, and Walter Scott was his favourite poet. I whispered to my neighbour, who was a Scotchman (by the way, the audience were almost all Scotch, and the room was All-Mac's —I beg your pardon, but I couldn't help it, I really couldn't help it)—"The professor has said the best poet was a Scotchman: I wager that he will say the worst poet was a Scotchman, too." And sure enough that worst poet, when he made his appearance, was a Northern Briton.

And as we are talking of bragging, and I am on my travels,

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can I forget one mighty republic—one—two mighty republics, where people are notoriously fond of passing off their claret for port? I am very glad, for the sake of a kind friend, that there is a great and influential party in the United, and, I trust, in the Confederate States,* who believe that Catawba wine is better than the best champagne. Opposite that famous old White House at Washington, whereof I shall ever have a grateful memory, they have set up an equestrian statue of General Jackson, by a self-taught American artist of no inconsiderable genius and skill. At an evening party a member of Congress seized me in a corner of the room, and asked me if I did not think this was *the finest equestrian statue in the world?* How was I to deal with this plain question, put to me in a corner? I was bound to reply, and accordingly said that I did *not* think it was the finest statue in the world. "Well, sir," says the member of Congress, "but you must remember that Mr. M—— had never seen a statue when he made this!" I suggested that to see other statues might do Mr. M—— no harm. Nor was any man more willing to own his defects, or more modest regarding his merits, than the sculptor himself, whom I met subsequently. But oh! what a charming article there was in a Washington paper next day about the impertinence of criticism and offensive tone of arrogance which Englishmen adopted towards men and works of genius in America! "Who was this man, who" &c. &c.? The Washington writer was angry because I would not accept this American claret as the finest port-wine in the world. Ah me! It is about blood and not wine that the quarrel now is, and who shall foretell its end?

How much claret that would be port if it could is handed about in every society! In the House of Commons what small-beer orators try to pass for strong! Stay: have I a spite against any one? It is a fact that the wife of the Member for Bungay has left off asking me and Mrs. Roundabout to her evening-parties. Now is the time to have a slap at him. I will say that he was always overrated, and that now he is lamentably falling off even from what he has been. I will back the Member for Stoke Poges against him; and show that the dashing young Member for Islington is a far sounder man than either. Have I any little literary animosities? Of course not. Men of letters never have. Otherwise, how I could serve out a competitor here, make a face over his works, and show that his would-be port is very meagre ordinaire indeed! Nonsense, man! Why so squeamish? Do they spare *you?* Now you have the whip in your hand, won't you lay on? You used to be a pretty whip enough as a young man, and liked it

* Written in July 1861.

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too. Is there no enemy who would be the better for a little thonging? No. I have militated in former times, not without glory; but I grow peaceable as I grow old. And if I have a literary enemy, why, he will probably write a book ere long, and then it will be *his* turn, and my favourite review will be down upon him.

My brethren, these sermons are professedly short; for I have that opinion of my dear congregation, which leads me to think that were I to preach at great length they would yawn, stamp, make noises, and perhaps go straightway out of church; and yet with this text I protest I could go on for hours. What multitudes of men, what multitudes of women, my dears, pass off their ordinaire for port, their small beer for strong! In literature, in politics, in the army, the navy, the church, at the bar, in the world, what an immense quantity of cheap liquor is made to do service for better sorts! Ask Serjeant Roland his opinion of Oliver Q.C. "Ordinaire, my good fellow, ordinaire, with a port-wine label!" Ask Oliver his opinion of Roland. "Never was a man so overrated by the world and by himself." Ask Tweedledumski his opinion of Tweedledeestein's performance. "A quack, my tear sir! an ignoramus, I geef you my vort. He gombose an opera! He is not fit to make dance a bear!" Ask Paddington and Buckmister, those two "swells" of fashion, what they think of each other. They are notorious ordinaire. You and I remember when they passed for very small wine, and now how high and mighty they have become. What do you say to Tomkins's sermons? Ordinaire trying to go down as orthodox port, and very meagre ordinaire too! To Hopkins's historical works?—to Pumkins's poetry? Ordinaire, ordinaire again—thin, feeble, overrated; and so down the whole list. And when we have done discussing our men friends, have we not all the women? Do these not advance absurd pretensions? Do these never give themselves airs? With feeble brains, don't they often set up to be *esprits forts*? Don't they pretend to be women of fashion, and cut their betters? Don't they try and pass off their ordinary-looking girls as beauties of the first order? Every man in his circle knows women who give themselves airs, and to whom we can apply the port-wine simile.

Come, my friends. Here is enough of ordinaire and port for to-day. My bottle has run out. Will anybody have any more? Let us go upstairs, and get a cup of tea from the ladies.

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TWEEDLEDUMSKI AND TWEEDLEDEESTEIN

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OGRES

I DARESAY the reader has remarked that the upright and independent vowel, which stands in the vowel list between E and O, has formed the subject of the main part of these essays. How does that vowel feel this morning?—fresh, good-humoured, and lively? The Roundabout lines, which fall from this pen, are correspondingly brisk and cheerful. Has anything, on the contrary, disagreed with the vowel? Has its rest been disturbed, or was yesterday's dinner too good, or yesterday's wine not good enough? Under such circumstances, a darkling misanthropic tinge, no doubt, is cast upon the paper. The jokes, if attempted, are elaborate and dreary. The bitter temper breaks out. That sneering manner is adopted, which you know, and which exhibits itself so especially when the writer is speaking about women. A moody carelessness comes over him. He sees no good in any body or thing: and treats gentlemen, ladies, history, and things in general, with a like gloomy flippancy. Agreed. When the vowel in question is in that mood, if you like airy gaiety and tender gushing benevolence—if you want to be satisfied with yourself and the rest of your fellow-beings; I recommend you, my dear creature, to go to some other shop in Cornhill, or turn to some other article. There are moods in the mind of the vowel of which we are speaking, when it is ill-conditioned and captious. Who always keeps good health and good humour? Do not philosophers grumble? Are not sages sometimes out of temper? and do not angel-women go off in tantrums? To-day my mood is dark. I scowl as I dip my pen in the inkstand.

Here is the day come round—for everything here is done with the utmost regularity:—intellectual labour, sixteen hours; meals, thirty-two minutes; exercise, a hundred and forty-eight minutes; conversation with the family, chiefly literary, and about the housekeeping, one hour and four minutes; sleep, three hours and fifteen minutes (at the end of the month, when the Magazine is complete, I own I take eight minutes more); and the rest for the toilette and the world. Well, I say, the *Roundabout Paper Day* being come, and the subject long since settled in my mind, an excellent

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subject—a most telling, lively, and popular subject—I go to breakfast determined to finish that meal in 9¾ minutes, as usual, and then retire to my desk and work, when—oh, provoking!—here in the paper is the very subject treated on which I was going to write! Yesterday another paper which I saw treated it—and of course, as I need not tell you, spoiled it. Last Saturday, another paper had an article on the subject; perhaps you may guess what it was—but I won't tell you. Only this is true, my favourite subject, which was about to make the best paper we have had for a long time; my bird, my game that I was going to shoot and serve up with such a delicate sauce, has been found by other sportsmen; and pop, pop, pop, a half-dozen of guns have banged at it, mangled it, and brought it down.

"And can't you take some other text?" say you. All this is mighty well. But if you have set your heart on a certain dish for dinner, be it cold boiled veal, or what you will, and they bring you turtle and venison, don't you feel disappointed? During your walk you have been making up your mind that that cold meat, with moderation and a pickle, will be a very sufficient dinner: you have accustomed your thoughts to it; and here, in place of it, is a turkey, surrounded by coarse sausages, or a reeking pigeon-pie, or a fulsome roast pig. I have known many a good and kind man made furiously angry by such a *contretemps*. I have known him lose his temper, call his wife and servants names, and a whole household made miserable. If, then, as is notoriously the case, it is too dangerous to baulk a man about his dinner, how much more about his article! I came to my meal with an ogre-like appetite and gusto. Fee, faw, fum! Wife, where is that tender little princekin? Have you trussed him, and did you stuff him nicely, and have you taken care to baste him, and do him, not too brown, as I told you? Quick! I am hungry! I begin to whet my knife, to roll my eyes about, and roar and clap my huge chest like a gorilla; and then my poor Ogrina has to tell me that the little princes have all run away, whilst she was in the kitchen making the paste to bake them in! I pause in the description. I won't condescend to report the bad language, which you know must ensue, when an ogre, whose mind is ill-regulated, and whose habits of self-indulgence are notorious, finds himself disappointed of his greedy hopes. What treatment of his wife, what abuse and brutal behaviour to his children, who, though ogrillons, are children! My dears, you may fancy, and need not ask my delicate pen to describe, the language and behaviour of a vulgar, coarse, greedy, large man with an immense mouth and teeth, which are too frequently employed in the gobbling and crunching of raw man's meat.

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And in this circuitous way you see I have reached my present subject, which is, Ogres. You fancy they are dead or only fictitious characters—mythical representatives of strength, cruelty, stupidity, and lust for blood? Though they had seven-leagued boots, you remember all sorts of little whipping-snapping Tom Thumbs used to elude and outrun them. They were so stupid that they gave in to the most shallow ambuscades and artifices: witness that well-known ogre, who, because Jack cut open the hasty-pudding, instantly ripped open his own stupid waistcoat and interior. They were cruel, brutal, disgusting, with their sharpened teeth, immense knives, and roaring voices! but they always ended by being overcome by little Tom Thumbkins, or some other smart little champion.

Yes; they were conquered in the end there is no doubt. They plunged headlong (and uttering the most frightful bad language) into some pit where Jack came with his smart *couteau de chasse*, and whipped their brutal heads off. They would be going to devour maidens,

> "But ever when it seemed
> Their need was at the sorest,
> A knight, in armour bright,
> Came riding through the forest."

And down, after a combat, would go the brutal persecutor, with a lance through his midriff. Yes, I say, this is very true and well. But you remember that round the ogre's cave the ground was covered, for hundreds and hundreds of yards, *with the bones of the victims* whom he had lured into the castle. Many knights and maids came to him and perished under his knife and teeth. Were dragons the same as ogres? monsters dwelling in caverns, whence they rushed, attired in plate armour, wielding pikes and torches, and destroying stray passengers who passed by their lair? Monsters, brutes, rapacious tyrants, ruffians, as they were, doubtless they ended by being overcome. But, before they were destroyed, they did a deal of mischief. The bones round their caves were countless. They had sent many brave souls to Hades, before their own fled, howling out of their rascal carcasses, to the same place of gloom.

There is no greater mistake than to suppose that fairies, champions, distressed damsels, and by consequence ogres, have ceased to exist. It may not be *ogreable* to them (pardon the horrible pleasantry, but as I am writing in the solitude of my chamber, I am grinding my teeth—yelling, roaring, and cursing—brandishing my scissors and paper-cutter and as it were have become an ogre). I say there is no greater mistake than to suppose that

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ogres have ceased to exist. We all *know* ogres. Their caverns are round us, and about us. There are the castles of several ogres within a mile of the spot where I write. I think some of them suspect I am an ogre myself. I am not, but I know they are. I visit them. I don't mean to say that they take a cold roast prince out of the cupboard, and have a cannibal feast before *me*. But I see the bones lying about the roads to their houses, and in the areas and gardens. Politeness, of course, prevents me from making any remarks: but I know them well enough. One of the ways to know 'em is to watch the scared looks of the ogres' wives and children. They lead an awful life. They are present at dreadful cruelties. In their excesses those ogres will stab about and kill not only strangers who happen to call in and ask a night's lodging, but they will outrage, murder, and chop up their own kin. We all know ogres, I say, and have been in their dens often. It is not necessary that ogres who ask you to dine should offer their guests the *peculiar dish* which they like. They cannot always get a Tom Thumb family. They eat mutton and beef too; and I daresay even go out to tea, and invite you to drink it. But I tell you there are numbers of them going about in the world. And now you have my word for it, and this little hint, it is quite curious what an interest society may be made to have for you by your determining to find out the ogres you meet there.

What does the man mean? says Mrs. Downright, to whom a joke is a very grave thing. I mean, madam, that in the company assembled in your genteel drawing-room, who bow here and there, and smirk in white neckcloths, you receive men who elbow through life successfully enough, but who are ogres in private: men wicked, false, rapacious, flattering; cruel hectors at home, smiling courtiers abroad; causing wives, children, servants, parents, to tremble before them, and smiling and bowing, as they bid strangers welcome into their castles. I say, there are men who have crunched the bones of victim after victim; in whose closets lie skeletons picked frightfully clean. When these ogres come out into the world, you don't suppose they show their knives, and their great teeth? A neat simple white neckcloth, a merry rather obsequious manner, a cadaverous look, perhaps, now and again, and a rather dreadful grin; but I know ogres very considerably respected: and when you hint to such and such a man, "My dear sir, Mr. Sharpus, whom you appear to like, is, I assure you, a most dreadful cannibal;" the gentleman cries, "Oh, psha, nonsense! Daresay not so black as he is painted. Daresay not worse than his neighbours." We condone everything in this country—private treason, falsehood, flattery, cruelty at home, roguery, and double-dealing. What! Do you

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mean to say in your acquaintance you don't know ogres guilty of countless crimes of fraud and force, and that knowing them you don't shake hands with them; dine with them at your table; and meet them at their own? Depend upon it in the time when there were real live ogres, in real caverns or castles, gobbling up real knights and virgins, when they went into the world—the neighbouring market-town, let us say, or earl's castle—though their nature and reputation were pretty well known, their notorious foibles were never alluded to. You would say, "What, Blunderbore, my boy! How do you do? How well and fresh you look! What's the receipt you have for keeping so young and rosy?" And your wife would softly ask after Mrs. Blunderbore and the dear children. Or it would be, "My dear Humguffin! try that pork. It is home-bred, home-fed, and, I promise you, tender. Tell me if you think it is as good as yours? John, a glass of burgundy to Colonel Humguffin!" You don't suppose there would be any unpleasant allusions to disagreeable home-reports regarding Humguffin's manner of furnishing his larder? I say we all of us know ogres. We shake hands and dine with ogres. And if inconvenient moralists tell us we are cowards for our pains, we turn round with a *tu quoque*, or say that we don't meddle with other folk's affairs; that people are much less black than they are painted, and so on. What! Won't half the county go to Ogreham Castle? Won't some of the clergy say grace at dinner? Won't the mothers bring their daughters to dance with the young Rawheads? And if Lady Ogreham happens to die—I won't say to go the way of all flesh, that is too revolting—I say if Ogreham is a widower, do you aver, on your conscience and honour, that mothers will not be found to offer their young girls to supply the lamented lady's place? How stale this misanthropy is! Something must have disagreed with this cynic. Yes, my good woman. I daresay you would like to call another subject. Yes, my fine fellow; ogre at home, supple as a dancing-master abroad, and shaking in thy pumps, and wearing a horrible grin of sham gaiety to conceal thy terror, lest I should point thee out:—thou art prosperous and honoured, art thou? I say thou hast been a tyrant and a robber. Thou hast plundered the poor. Thou hast bullied the weak. Thou hast laid violent hands on the goods of the innocent and confiding. Thou hast made a prey of the meek and gentle who asked for thy protection. Thou hast been hard to thy kinsfolk, and cruel to thy family. Go, monster! Ah, when shall little Jack come and drill daylight through thy wicked cannibal carcass? I see the ogre pass on, bowing right and left to the company; and he gives a dreadful sidelong glance of suspicion as he is talking to my Lord Bishop in the corner there.

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Ogres in our days need not be giants at all. In former times, and in children's books, where it is necessary to paint your moral in such large letters that there can be no mistake about it, ogres are made with that enormous mouth and *ratelier* which you know of, and with which they can swallow down a baby, almost without using that great knife which they always carry. They are too cunning nowadays. They go about in society, slim, small, quietly dressed, and showing no especially great appetite. In my own young days there used to be play ogres—men who would devour a young fellow in one sitting, and leave him without a bit of flesh on his bones. They were quite gentlemanlike-looking people. They got the young fellow into their cave. Champagne, pâté-de-foie-gras, and numberless good things, were handed about; and then, having eaten, the young man was devoured in his turn. I believe these card and dice ogres have died away almost as entirely as the hasty-pudding giants whom Tom Thumb overcame. Now, there are ogres in City courts who lure you into their dens. About our Cornish mines I am told there are many most plausible ogres, who tempt you into their caverns and pick your bones there. In a certain newspaper there used to be lately a whole column of advertisements from ogres who would put on the most plausible, nay, piteous appearance, in order to inveigle their victims. You would read, "A tradesman, established for seventy years in the City, and known and much respected by Messrs. N. M. Rothschild and Baring Brothers, has pressing need for three pounds until next Saturday. He can give security for half a million, and forty thousand pounds will be given for the use of the loan," and so on; or, "An influential body of capitalists are about to establish a company, of which the business will be enormous and the profits proportionately prodigious. They will require A SECRETARY, of good address and appearance, at a salary of two thousand per annum. He need not be able to write, but address and manners are absolutely necessary. As a mark of confidence in the company, he will have to deposit," &c.; or, "A young widow (of pleasing manners and appearance) who has a pressing necessity for four pounds ten for three weeks, offers her Erard's grand piano valued at three hundred guineas; a diamond cross of eight hundred pounds; and board and lodging in her elegant villa near Banbury Cross, with the best references and society, in return for the loan." I suspect these people are ogres. There are ogres and ogres. Polyphemus was a great, tall, one-eyed, notorious ogre, fetching his victims out of a hole, and gobbling them one after another. There could be no mistake about him. But so were the Sirens ogres—pretty blue-eyed things, peeping at you coaxingly from out of the water, and singing their melodious

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wheedles. And the bones round their caves were more numerous than the ribs, skulls, and thigh-bones round the cavern of hulking Polypheme.

To the castle-gates of some of these monsters up rides the dapper champion of the pen; puffs boldly upon the horn which hangs by the chain; enters the hall resolutely, and challenges the big tyrant sulking within. We defy him to combat, the enormous roaring ruffian! We give him a meeting on the green plain before his castle. Green? No wonder it should be green: it is manured with human bones. After a few graceful wheels and curvets, we take our ground. We stoop over our saddle. 'Tis but to kiss the locket of our lady-love's hair. And now the vizor is up: the lance is in rest (Gillott's iron is the point for me). A touch of the spur in the gallant sides of Pegasus, and we gallop at the great brute.

"Cut off his ugly head, Flibbertigibbet, my squire!" And who are these who pour out of the castle? the imprisoned maidens, the maltreated widows, the poor old hoary grandfathers, who have been locked up in the dungeons these scores and scores of years, writhing under the tyranny of that ruffian! Ah, ye knights of the pen! May honour be your shield, and truth tip your lances! Be gentle to all gentle people. Be modest to women. Be tender to children. And as for the Ogre Humbug, out sword and have at him.

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*ON TWO ROUNDABOUT PAPERS WHICH I INTENDED TO WRITE**

WE have all heard of a place paved with good intentions:—a place which I take to be a very dismal, useless, and unsatisfactory terminus for many pleasant thoughts, kindly fancies, gentle wishes, merry little quips and pranks, harmless jokes which die as it were the moment of their birth. Poor little children of the brain! He was a dreary theologian who huddled you under such a melancholy cenotaph, and laid you in the vaults under the flagstones of Hades! I trust that some of the best actions we have all of us committed in our lives have been committed in fancy. It is not all wickedness we are thinking, *que diable!* Some of our thoughts are bad enough I grant you. Many a one you and I have had here below. Ah mercy, what a monster! what crooked horns! what leering eyes! what a flaming mouth! what cloven feet, and what a hideous writhing tail! Oh, let us fall down on our knees, repeat our most potent exorcisms, and overcome the brute. Spread your black pinions, fly—fly to the dusky realms of Eblis, and bury thyself under the paving-stones of his hall, dark genie! But *all* thoughts are not so. No—no. There are the pure: there are the kind: there are the gentle. There are sweet unspoken thanks before a fair scene of nature: at a sunsetting below a glorious sea; or a moon and a host of stars shining over it: at a bunch of children playing in the street, or a group of flowers by the hedge-side, or a bird singing there. At a hundred moments or occurrences of the day good thoughts pass through the mind, let us trust, which never are spoken; prayers are made which never are said; and Te Deum is sung without church, clerk, choristers, parson, or organ. Why, there's my enemy: who got the place I wanted; who maligned me to the woman I wanted to be well with; who supplanted me in the good graces of my patron. I don't say anything about the matter:

* The following paper was written in 1861, after the extraordinary affray between Major Murray and the money-lender in a house in Northumberland Street, Strand, and subsequent to the appearance of M. Du Chaillu's book on Gorillas.

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but, my poor old enemy, in my secret mind I have movements of as tender charity towards you, you old scoundrel, as ever I had when we were boys together at school. You ruffian! do you fancy I forget that we were fond of each other? We are still. We share our toffy; go halves at the tuck-shop; do each other's exercises; prompt each other with the word in construing or repetition; and tell the most frightful fibs to prevent each other from being found out. We meet each other in public. Ware a fight! Get them into different parts of the room! Our friends hustle round us. Capulet and Montague are not more at odds than the houses of Roundabout and Wrightabout, let us say. It is, "My dear Mrs. Buffer, do kindly put yourself in the chair between those two men!" Or, "My dear Wrightabout, will you take that charming Lady Blancmange down to supper? She adores your poems; and gave five shillings for your autograph at the fancy fair." In like manner the peacemakers gather round Roundabout on his part: he is carried to a distant corner, and coaxed out of the way of the enemy with whom he is at feud.

When we meet in the Square at Verona, out flash rapiers, and we fall to. But in his private mind Tybalt owns that Mercutio has a rare wit, and Mercutio is sure that his adversary is a gallant gentleman. Look at the amphitheatre yonder. You do not suppose those gladiators who fought and perished, as hundreds of spectators in that grim Circus held thumbs down, and cried, "Kill, kill!"—you do not suppose the combatants of necessity hated each other? No more than the celebrated trained bands of literary sword-and-buckler men hate the adversaries whom they meet in the arena. They engage at the given signal; feint and parry; slash, poke, rip each other open, dismember limbs, and hew off noses: but in the way of business, and, I trust, with mutual private esteem.. For instance, I salute the warriors of the Superfine Company with the honours due among warriors. Here's at you, Spartacus, my lad. A hit, I acknowledge. A palpable hit! Ha! how do you like that poke in the eye in return? When the trumpets sing truce, or the spectators are tired, we bow to the noble company: withdraw; and get a cool glass of wine in our *rendezvous des braves gladiateurs*.

By the way, I saw that amphitheatre of Verona under the strange light of a lurid eclipse some years ago: and I have been there in spirit for these twenty lines past, under a vast gusty awning, now with twenty thousand fellow-citizens looking on from the benches, now in the circus itself, a grim gladiator with sword and net, or a meek martyr—was I?—brought out to be gobbled up by the lions? or a huge, shaggy, tawny lion myself, on whom the

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dogs were going to be set? What a day of excitement I have had to be sure! But I must get away from Verona, or who knows how much farther the Roundabout Pegasus may carry me?

We were saying, my Muse, before we dropped and perched on earth for a couple of sentences, that our unsaid words were in some limbo or other, as real as those we have uttered; that the thoughts which have passed through our brains are as actual as any to which our tongues and pens have given currency. For instance, besides what is here hinted at, I have thought ever so much more about Verona: about an early Christian church I saw there; about a great dish of rice we had at the inn; about the bugs there; about ever so many more details of that day's journey from Milan to Venice; about Lake Garda, which lay on the way from Milan, and so forth. I say what fine things we have thought of, haven't we, all of us? Ah, what a fine tragedy that was I thought of, and never wrote! On the day of the dinner of the Oystermongers' Company, what a noble speech I thought of in the cab, and broke down—I don't mean the cab, but the speech. Ah, if you could but read some of the unwritten Roundabout papers—how you would be amused! Aha! my friend, I catch you saying, "Well then, I wish *this* was unwritten with all my heart." Very good. I owe you one. I do confess a hit, a palpable hit.

One day in the past month, as I was reclining on the bench of thought, with that ocean the *Times* newspaper spread before me, the ocean cast up on the shore at my feet two famous subjects for Roundabout Papers, and I picked up those waifs, and treasured them away until I could polish them and bring them to market. That scheme is not to be carried out. I can't write about those subjects. And though I cannot write about them, I may surely tell what are the subjects I am going *not* to write about.

The first was that Northumberland Street encounter, which all the papers have narrated. Have any novelists of our days a scene and catastrophe more strange and terrible than this which occurs at noonday within a few yards of the greatest thoroughfare in Europe? At the theatres they have a new name for their melodramatic pieces, and call them "Sensation Dramas." What a sensation drama this is! What have people been flocking to see at the Adelphi Theatre for the last hundred and fifty nights? A woman pitched overboard out of a boat, and a certain Miles taking a tremendous "header," and bringing her to shore? Bagatelle! What is this compared to the real life-drama, of which a midday representation takes place just opposite the Adelphi in Northumberland Street? The brave Dumas, the intrepid Ainsworth, the terrible Eugène Sue, the cold-shudder-inspiring "Woman in White,"

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the astounding author of the "Mysteries of the Court of London," never invented anything more tremendous than this. It might have happened to you and me. We want to borrow a little money. We are directed to an agent. We propose a pecuniary transaction at a short date. He goes into the next room, as we fancy, to get the bank-notes, and returns with "two very pretty delicate little ivory-handled pistols," and blows a portion of our heads off. After this, what is the use of being squeamish about the probabilities and possibilities in the writing of fiction? Years ago I remember making merry over a play of Dumas, called "Kean," in which the "Coal-Hole Tavern" was represented on the Thames, with a fleet of pirate-ships moored alongside. Pirate-ships? Why not? What a cavern of terror was this in Northumberland Street, with its splendid furniture covered with dust, its empty bottles, in the midst of which sits a grim "agent," amusing himself by firing pistols, aiming at the unconscious mantelpiece, or at the heads of his customers!

After this, what is not possible? It is possible Hungerford Market is mined, and will explode some day. Mind how you go in for a penny ice unawares. "Pray step this way," says a quiet person at the door. You enter—into a back-room:—a quiet room; rather a dark room. "Pray take your place in a chair." And she goes to fetch the penny ice. *Malheureux!* The chair sinks down with you—sinks, and sinks, and sinks—a large wet flannel suddenly envelops your face and throttles you. Need we say any more? After Northumberland Street, what is improbable? Surely there is no difficulty in crediting Bluebeard. I withdraw my last month's opinions about ogres. Ogres? Why not? I protest I have seldom contemplated anything more terribly ludicrous than this "agent" in the dingy splendour of his den, surrounded by dusty ormolu and piles of empty bottles, firing pistols for his diversion at the mantelpiece until his clients come in! Is pistol-practice so common in Northumberland Street, that it passes without notice in the lodging-houses there?

We spake anon of good thoughts. About bad thoughts? Is there some Northumberland Street chamber in your heart and mine, friend: close to the every-day street of life: visited by daily friends: visited by people on business; in which affairs are transacted; jokes are uttered; wine is drunk; through which people come and go; wives and children pass; and in which murder sits unseen until the terrible moment when he rises up and kills? A farmer, say, has a gun over the mantelpiece in his room where he sits at his daily meals and rest: caressing his children, joking with his friends, smoking his pipe in his calm. One night the gun is taken down: the farmer goes out: and it is a murderer who comes back and

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puts the piece up and drinks by that fireside. Was he a murderer yesterday, when he was tossing the baby on his knee, and when his hands were playing with his little girl's yellow hair? Yesterday there was no blood on them at all; they were shaken by honest men: have done many a kind act in their time very likely. He leans his head on one of them, the wife comes in with her anxious looks of welcome, the children are prattling as they did yesterday round the father's knee at the fire, and Cain is sitting by the embers, and Abel lies dead on the moor. Think of the gulf between now and yesterday. Oh, yesterday! Oh, the days when those two loved each other and said their prayers side by side! He goes to sleep, perhaps, and dreams that his brother is alive. Be true, O dream! Let him live in dreams, and wake no more. Be undone, O crime, O crime! But the sun rises: and the officers of conscience come: and yonder lies the body on the moor. I happened to pass, and looked at the Northumberland Street house the other day. A few loiterers were gazing up at the dingy windows. A plain ordinary face of a house enough—and in a chamber in it one man suddenly rose up, pistol in hand, to slaughter another. Have you ever killed any one in your thoughts? Has your heart compassed any man's death? In your mind, have you ever taken a brand from the altar, and slain your brother? How many plain ordinary faces of men do we look at, unknowing of murder behind those eyes? Lucky for you and me, brother, that we have good thoughts unspoken. But the bad ones? I tell you that the sight of those blank windows in Northumberland Street—through which, as it were, my mind could picture the awful tragedy glimmering behind—set me thinking, "Mr. Street-Preacher, here is a text for one of your pavement sermons. But it is too glum and serious. You eschew dark thoughts: and desire to be cheerful and merry in the main." And such being the case, you see we must have no Roundabout Essay on this subject.

Well, I had another arrow in my quiver. (So, you know, had William Tell a bolt for his son, the apple of his eye; and a shaft for Gessler, in case William came to any trouble with the first poor little target.) And this, I must tell you, was to have been a rare Roundabout performance—one of the very best that has ever appeared in this series. It was to have contained all the deep pathos of Addison; the logical precision of Rabelais: the childlike playfulness of Swift; the manly stoicism of Sterne; the metaphysical depth of Goldsmith; the blushing modesty of Fielding; the epigrammatic terseness of Walter Scott; the uproarious humour of Sam Richardson; and the gay simplicity of Sam Johnson; —it was to have combined all these qualities, with some excellences

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of modern writers whom I could name:—but circumstances have occurred which have rendered this Roundabout Essay also impossible.

I have not the least objection to tell you what was to have been the subject of that other admirable Roundabout Paper. Gracious powers! the Dean of St. Patrick's never had a better theme. The paper was to have been on the Gorillas, to be sure. I was going to imagine myself to be a young surgeon-apprentice from Charleston, in South Carolina, who ran away to Cuba on account of unhappy family circumstances, with which nobody has the least concern; who sailed thence to Africa in a large roomy schooner with an extraordinary vacant space between decks. I was subject to dreadful ill-treatment from the first mate of the ship, who, when I found she was a slaver, altogether declined to put me on shore. I was chased—we were chased—by three British frigates and a seventy-four, which we engaged and captured; but were obliged to scuttle and sink, as we could sell them in no African port; and I never shall forget the look of manly resignation, combined with considerable disgust, of the British Admiral as he walked the plank, after cutting off his pigtail, which he handed to me, and which I still have in charge for his family at Boston, Lincolnshire, England.

We made the port of Bpoopoo, at the confluence of the Bungo and Sgglolo rivers (which you may see in Swammerdahl's map) on the 31st April last year. Our passage had been so extraordinarily rapid, owing to the continued drunkenness of the captain and chief officers, by which I was obliged to work the ship and take her in command, that we reached Bpoopoo six weeks before we were expected, and five before the Caffres from the interior and from the great slave depôt at Zbabblo were expected. Their delay caused us not a little discomfort, because, though we had taken the four English ships, we knew that Sir Byam Martin's iron-cased squadron, with the *Warrior*, the *Impregnable*, the *Sanconiathon*, and the *Berosus*, were cruising in the neighbourhood, and might prove too much for us.

It not only became necessary to quit Bpoopoo before the arrival of the British fleet or the rainy season, but to get our people on board as soon as might be. While the chief mate, with a detachment of seamen, hurried forward to the Pgogo lake, where we expected a considerable part of our cargo, the second mate, with six men, four chiefs, King Fbumbo, an Obi man, and myself, went N.W. by W., towards King Mtoby's-town, where we knew many hundreds of our between-deck passengers were to be got together. We went down the Pdodo river, shooting snipes, ostriches, and rhinoceros in plenty, and I think a few elephants, until, by the

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advice of a guide, who I now believe was treacherous, we were induced to leave the Pdodo and march N.E. by N.N. Here Lieutenant Larkins, who had persisted in drinking rum from morning to night, and thrashing me in his sober moments during the whole journey, died, and I have too good reason to know was eaten with much relish by the natives. At Mgoo, where there are barracoons and a depôt for our cargo, we had no news of our expected freight; accordingly, as time pressed exceedingly, parties were despatched in advance towards the great Washaboo lake, by which the caravans usually come towards the coast. Here we found no caravan, but only four negroes, down with the ague, whom I treated, I am bound to say, unsuccessfully, whilst we waited for our friends. We used to take watch and watch in front of the place, both to guard ourselves from attack, and get early news of the approaching caravan.

At last, on the 23rd September, as I was in advance with Charles Rogers, second mate, and two natives with bows and arrows, we were crossing a great plain skirted by a forest, when we saw emerging from a ravine what I took to be three negroes—a very tall one, one of a moderate size, and one quite little.

Our native guides shrieked out some words in their language, of which Charles Rogers knew something. I thought it was the advance of the negroes whom we expected. "No!" said Rogers (who swore dreadfully in conversation), "it is the Gorillas!" And he fired both barrels of his gun, bringing down the little one first, and the female afterwards.

The male, who was untouched, gave a howl that you might have heard a league off; advanced towards us as if he would attack us, and then turned and ran away with inconceivable celerity towards the wood.

We went up towards the fallen brutes. The little one by the female appeared to be about two years old. It lay bleating and moaning on the ground, stretching out its little hands, with movements and looks so strangely resembling human, that my heart sickened with pity. The female, who had been shot through both legs, could not move. She howled most hideously when I approached the little one.

"We must be off," said Rogers, "or the whole Gorilla race may be down upon us." "The little one is only shot in the leg," I said. "I'll bind the limb up, and we will carry the beast with us on board."

The poor little wretch held up its leg to show it was wounded, and looked to me with appealing eyes. It lay quite still whilst I looked for and found the bullet, and, tearing off a piece of my shirt,

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bandaged up the wound. I was so occupied in this business that I hardly heard Rogers cry "Run! run!" and when I looked up——

When I looked up, with a roar the most horrible I ever heard —a roar? ten thousand roars—a whirling army of dark beings rushed by me. Rogers, who had bullied me so frightfully during the voyage, and who had encouraged my fatal passion for play, so that I own I owed him 1500 dollars, was overtaken, felled, brained, and torn into ten thousand pieces; and I daresay the same fate would have fallen on me, but that the little Gorilla, whose wound I had dressed, flung its arms round my neck (their arms, you know, are much longer than ours). And when an immense grey Gorilla, with hardly any teeth, brandishing the trunk of a gollybosh-tree about sixteen feet long, came up to me roaring, the little one squeaked out something plaintive, which, of course, I could not understand; on which suddenly the monster flung down his tree, squatted down on his huge hams by the side of the little patient, and began to bellow and weep.

And now, do you see whom I had rescued? I had rescued the young Prince of the Gorillas, who was out walking with his nurse and footman. The footman had run off to alarm his master, and certainly I never saw a footman run quicker. The whole army of Gorillas rushed forward to rescue their prince, and punish his enemies. If the King Gorilla's emotion was great, fancy what the Queen's must have been when *she* came up! She arrived, on a litter, neatly enough made with wattled branches, on which she lay, with her youngest child, a prince of three weeks old.

My little *protégé*, with the wounded leg, still persisted in hugging me with its arms (I think I mentioned that they are longer than those of men in general), and as the poor little brute was immensely heavy, and the Gorillas go at a prodigious pace, a litter was made for us likewise; and my thirst much refreshed by a footman (the same domestic who had given the alarm) running hand over hand up a cocoa-nut tree, tearing the rinds off, breaking the shell on his head, and handing me the fresh milk in its cup. My little patient partook of a little, stretching out his dear little unwounded foot, with which, or with its hand, a Gorilla can help itself indiscriminately. Relays of large Gorillas relieved each other at the litters at intervals of twenty minutes, as I calculated by my watch, one of Jones and Bates's, of Boston, Mass., though I have been unable to this day to ascertain how these animals calculate time with such surprising accuracy. We slept for that night under——

And now, you see, we arrive at really the most interesting part of my travels in the country which I intended to visit, viz. the

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manners and habits of the Gorillas *chez eux*. I give the heads of this narrative only, the full account being suppressed for a reason which shall presently be given. The heads, then, of the chapters, are briefly as follows:—

The author's arrival in the Gorilla country. Its geographical position. Lodgings assigned to him up a gum-tree. Constant attachment of the little Prince. His Royal Highness's gratitude. Anecdotes of his wit, playfulness, and extraordinary precocity. Am offered a portion of poor Larkins for my supper, but decline with horror. Footman brings me a young crocodile: fishy, but very palatable. Old crocodiles too tough: ditto rhinoceros. Visit the Queen Mother—an enormous old Gorilla, quite white. Prescribe for her Majesty. Meeting of Gorillas at what appears a parliament amongst them: presided over by old Gorilla in cocoa-nut-fibre wig. Their sports. Their customs. A privileged class amongst them. Extraordinary likeness of Gorillas to people at home, both at Charleston, S.C., my native place; and London, England, which I have visited. Flat-nosed Gorillas and blue-nosed Gorillas; their hatred, and wars between them. In a part of the country (its geographical position described) I see several negroes under Gorilla domination. Well treated by their masters. Frog-eating Gorillas across the Salt Lake. Bull-headed Gorillas—their mutual hostility. Green Island Gorillas. More quarrelsome than the Bull-heads, and howl much louder. I am called to attend one of the princesses. Evident partiality of H.R.H. for me. Jealousy and rage of large red-headed Gorilla. How shall I escape?

Ay, how indeed? Do you wish to know? Is your curiosity excited? Well, I *do* know how I escaped. I could tell the most extraordinary adventures that happened to me. I could show you resemblances to people at home, that would make them blue with rage and you crack your sides with laughter. . . . And what is the reason I cannot write this paper, having all the facts before me? The reason is, that walking down Saint James Street yesterday, I met a friend who says to me, "Roundabout, my boy, have you seen your picture? Here it is!" And he pulls out a portrait, executed in photography, of your humble servant, as an immense and most unpleasant-featured baboon, with long hairy hands, and called by the waggish artist "A Literary Gorilla." O horror! And now you see why I can't play off this joke myself, and moralise on the fable, as it has been narrated already *de me*.

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A MISSISSIPPI BUBBLE

THE group of dusky children of the captivity on the next page is copied out of a little sketch-book which I carried in many a roundabout journey, and will point a moral as well as any other sketch in the volume. The drawing was made in a country where there was such hospitality, friendship, kindness, shown to the humble designer, that his eyes do not care to look out for faults, or his pen to note them. How they sang; how they laughed and grinned; how they scraped, bowed, and complimented you and each other, those negroes of the cities of the Southern parts of the then United States! My business kept me in the towns; I was but in one negro-plantation village, and there were only women and little children, the men being out afield. But there was plenty of cheerfulness in the huts, under the great trees—I speak of what I saw—and amidst the dusky bondsmen of the cities. I witnessed a curious gaiety; heard amongst the black folk endless singing, shouting, and laughter; and saw on holidays black gentlemen and ladies arrayed in such splendour and comfort as freeborn workmen in our towns seldom exhibit. What a grin and bow that dark gentleman performed, who was the porter at the colonel's, when he said, "you write your name, mas'r, else I will forgot." I am not going into the slavery question; I am not an advocate for "the institution," as I know, madam, by that angry toss of your head, you are about to declare me to be. For domestic purposes, my dear lady, it seemed to me about the dearest institution that can be devised. In a house in a Southern city you will find fifteen negroes doing the work which John, the cook, the housemaid, and the help, do perfectly in your own comfortable London house. And these fifteen negroes are the pick of a family of some eighty or ninety: twenty are too sick, or too old for work, let us say; twenty too clumsy; twenty are too young, and have to be nursed and watched by ten more.* And master has to maintain the immense

* This was an account given by a gentleman at Richmond of his establishment. Six European servants would have kept his house and stables well. "His farm," he said, "barely sufficed to maintain the negroes residing on it."

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crew to do the work of half-a-dozen willing hands. No, no; let Mitchell, the exile from poor dear enslaved Ireland, wish for a gang of "fat niggers"; I would as soon you should make me a present of a score of Bengal elephants, when I need but a single stout horse to pull my brougham.

How hospitable they were, those Southern men! In the North itself the welcome was not kinder, as I, who have eaten Northern and Southern salt can testify. As for New Orleans, in spring-time,—just when the orchards were flushing over with peach-

blossoms, and the sweet herbs came to flavour the juleps—it seemed to me the city of the world where you can eat and drink the most and suffer the least. At Bordeaux itself, claret is not better to drink than at New Orleans. 'It was all good—believe an expert Robert—from the half-dollar Médoc of the public hotel table, to the private gentleman's choicest wine. Claret is, somehow, good in that gifted place at dinner, at supper, and at breakfast in the morning. It is good: it is superabundant—and there is nothing to pay. Find me speaking ill of such a country! When I do,

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pone me pigris campis: smother me in a desert, or let Mississippi or Garonne drown me! At that comfortable tavern on Pontchartrain we had a *bouillabaisse* than which a better was never eaten at Marseilles: and not the least headache in the morning, I give you my word; on the contrary, you only wake with a sweet refreshing thirst for claret and water. They say there is fever there in the autumn: but not in the spring-time, when the peach-blossoms blush over the orchards, and the sweet herbs come to flavour the juleps.

I was bound from New Orleans to Saint Louis; and our walk was constantly on the Levee, whence we could see a hundred of those huge white Mississippi steamers at their moorings in the river: "Look," said my friend Lochlomond to me, as we stood one day on the quay—"look at that post! Look at that coffee-house behind it! Sir, last year a steamer blew up in the river yonder, just where you see those men pulling off in a boat. By that post where you are standing a mule was cut in two by a fragment of the burst machinery, and a bit of the chimney-stove in that first-floor window of the coffee-house killed a negro who was cleaning knives in the top room!" I looked at the post, at the coffee-house window, at the steamer in which I was going to embark, at my friend, with a pleasing interest not divested of melancholy. Yesterday it was the mule, thinks I, who was cut in two: it may be *cras mihi.* Why, in the same little sketch-book there is a drawing of an Alabama river steamer which blew up on the very next voyage after that in which your humble servant was on board! Had I but waited another week, I might have—— These incidents give a queer zest to the voyage down the life-stream in America. When our huge, tall, white, pasteboard castle of a steamer began to work up stream, every limb in her creaked, and groaned, and quivered, so that you might fancy she would burst right off. Would she hold together, or would she split into ten millions of shivers? O my home and children! Would your humble servant's body be cut in two across yonder chain on the Levee, or be precipitated into yonder first-floor, so as to damage the chest of a black man cleaning boots at the window? The black man is safe for me, thank goodness. But you see the little accident *might* have happened. It has happened; and if to a mule, why not to a more docile animal? On our journey up the Mississippi, I give you my honour we were on fire three times, and burned our cook-room down. The deck at night was a great firework—the chimney spouted myriads of stars, which fell blackening on our garments, sparkling on to the deck, or gleaming into the mighty stream through which we laboured—the mighty yellow stream with all its snags.

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How I kept up my courage through these dangers shall now be narrated. The excellent landlord of the "Saint Charles Hotel," when I was going away, begged me to accept two bottles of the very finest Cognac, with his compliments; and I found them in my state-room with my luggage. Lochlomond came to see me off, and, as he squeezed my hand at parting, "Roundabout," says he, "the wine mayn't be very good on board, so I have brought a dozen-case of the Médoc which you liked;" and we grasped together the hands of friendship and farewell. Whose boat is this pulling up to the ship? It is our friend Glenlivat, who gave us the dinner on Lake Pontchartrain. "Roundabout," says he, "we have tried to do what we could for you, my boy; and it has been done *de bon cœur*" (I detect a kind tremulousness in the good fellow's voice as he speaks). "I say—hem!—the a—the wine isn't too good on board, so I've brought you a dozen of Médoc for your voyage, you know. And God bless you; and when I come to London in May I shall come and see you. Hallo! here's Johnson come to see you off, too!"

As I am a miserable sinner, when Johnson grasped my hand, he said, "Mr. Roundabout, you can't be sure of the wine on board these steamers, so I thought I would bring you a little case of that light claret which you liked at my house." *Et de trois!* No wonder I could face the Mississippi with so much courage supplied to me! Where are you, honest friends, who gave me of your kindness and your cheer? May I be considerably boiled, blown up, and snagged, if I speak hard words of you. May claret turn sour ere I do!

Mounting the stream it chanced that we had very few passengers. How far is the famous city of Memphis from New Orleans? I do not mean the Egyptian Memphis, but the American Memphis, from which to the American Cairo we slowly toiled up the river—to the American Cairo at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. And at Cairo we parted company from the boat, and from some famous and gifted fellow-passengers who joined us at Memphis, and whose pictures we had seen in many cities of the South. I do not give the names of these remarkable people, unless, by some wondrous chance, in inventing a name I should light upon that real one which some of them bore; but if you please I will say that our fellow-passengers whom we took in at Memphis were no less personages than the Vermont Giant and the famous Bearded Lady of Kentucky and her son. Their pictures I had seen in many cities through which I travelled with my own little performance. I think the Vermont Giant was a trifle taller in his pictures than he was in life (being represented in the former as, at

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least, some two stories high); but the lady's prodigious beard received no more than justice at the hands of the painter; that portion of it which I saw being really most black, rich, and curly—I say the portion of beard, for this modest or prudent woman kept I don't know how much of the beard covered up with a red handkerchief, from which I suppose it only emerged when she went to bed, or when she exhibited it professionally.

The Giant, I must think, was an overrated giant. I have known gentlemen, not in the profession, better made, and I should say taller, than the Vermont gentleman. A strange feeling I used to have at meals; when, on looking round our little society, I saw the Giant, the Bearded Lady of Kentucky, the little Bearded Boy of three years old, the Captain (this I *think;* but at this distance of time I would not like to make the statement on affidavit), and the three other passengers, all with their knives in their mouths making play at the dinner—a strange feeling I say it was, and as though I was in a castle of ogres. But, after all, why so squeamish? A few scores of years back, the finest gentlemen and ladies of Europe did the like. Belinda ate with her knife; and Saccharissa had only that weapon, or a two-pronged fork, or a spoon, for her peas. Have you ever looked at Gilray's print of the Prince of Wales, a languid voluptuary, retiring after his meal, and noted the toothpick which he uses? . . . You are right, madam; I own that the subject is revolting and terrible. I will not pursue it. Only—allow that a gentleman, in a shaky steamboat, on a dangerous river, in a far-off country, which caught fire three times during the voyage—(of course I mean the steamboat, not the country)—seeing a giant, a voracious supercargo, a bearded lady, and a little boy, not three years of age, with a chin already quite black and curly, all plying their victuals down their throats with their knives—allow, madam, that in such a company a man had a right to feel a little nervous. I don't know whether you have ever remarked the Indian jugglers swallowing their knives, or seen, as I have, a whole table of people performing the same trick; but if you look at their eyes when they do it, I assure you there is a roll in them which is dreadful.

Apart from this usage, which they practise in common with many thousand most estimable citizens, the Vermont gentleman, and the Kentucky whiskered lady—or did I say the reverse?—whichever you like, my dear sir—were quite quiet, modest, unassuming people. She sat working with her needle, if I remember right. He, I suppose, slept in the great cabin, which was seventy feet long at the least, nor; I am bound to say, did I hear in the night any snores or roars, such as you would fancy ought to accom-

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pany the sleep of ogres. Nay, this giant had quite a small appetite (unless, to be sure, he went forward and ate a sheep or two in private with his horrid knife—oh, the dreadful thought; but in *public*, I say, he had quite a delicate appetite), and was also a teetotaler. I don't remember to have heard the lady's voice, though I might, not unnaturally, have been curious to hear it. Was her voice a deep, rich, magnificent bass; or was it soft, fluty, and mild? I shall never know now. Even if she comes to this country, I shall never go and see her. I *have* seen her, and for nothing.

You would have fancied that as, after all, we were only some half-dozen on board, she might have dispensed with her red handkerchief, and talked, and eaten her dinner in comfort: but in covering her chin there was a kind of modesty. That beard was her profession: that beard brought the public to see her: out of her business she wished to put that beard aside as it were: as a barrister would wish to put off his wig. I know some who carry theirs into private life, and who mistake you and me for jury-boxes when they address us: but these are not your modest barristers, not your true gentlemen.

Well, I own I respected the lady for the modesty with which, her public business over, she retired into private life. She respected her life, and her beard. That beard having done its day's work, she puts it away in a handkerchief; and becomes, as far as in her lies, a private ordinary person. All public men and women of good sense, I should think, have this modesty. When, for instance, in my small way, poor Mrs. Brown comes simpering up to me, with her album in one hand, a pen in the other, and says, "Ho, ho, dear Mr. Roundabout, write us one of your amusing," &c. &c., my beard drops behind my handkerchief instantly. Why am I to wag my chin and grin for Mrs. Brown's good pleasure? My dear madam, I have been making faces all day. It is my profession. I do my comic business with the greatest pains, seriousness, and trouble: and with it make, I hope, a not dishonest livelihood. If you ask Monsieur Blondin to tea, you don't have a rope stretched from your garret window to the opposite side of the square, and request Monsieur to take his tea out on the centre of the rope? I lay my hand on this waistcoat, and declare that not once in the course of our voyage together did I allow the Kentucky Giant to suppose I was speculating on his stature, or the Bearded Lady to surmise that I wished to peep under the handkerchief which muffled the lower part of her face.

"And the more fool you," says some cynic. (Faugh, those cynics, I hate 'em) Don't you know, sir, that a man of genius is pleased to have his genius recognised; that a beauty likes to be admired; that an actor likes to be applauded; that stout old

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Wellington himself was pleased, and smiled when the people cheered him as he passed? Suppose you had paid some respectful elegant compliment to that lady? Suppose you had asked that giant if, for once, he would take anything at the liquor-bar? you might have learned a great deal of curious knowledge regarding giants and bearded ladies, about whom you evidently now know very little. There was that little boy of three years old, with a fine beard already, and his little legs and arms as seen out of his little frock, covered with a dark down. What a queer little capering satyr! He was quite good-natured, childish, rather solemn. He had a little Norval dress, I remember: the drollest little Norval.

I have said the B. L. had another child. Now this was a little girl of some six years old, as fair and as smooth of skin, dear madam, as your own darling cherubs. She wandered about the great cabin quite melancholy. No one seemed to care for her. All the family affections were centred on Master Esau yonder. His little beard was beginning to be a little fortune already, whereas Miss Rosalba was of no good to the family. No one would pay a cent to see *her* little fair face. No wonder the poor little maid was melancholy. As I looked at her, I seemed to walk more and more in a fairy tale, and more and more in a cavern of ogres. Was this a little fondling whom they had picked up in some forest, where lie the picked bones of the queen her tender mother, and the tough old defunct monarch her father? No. Doubtless they were quite good-natured people, these. I don't believe they were unkind to the little girl without the moustaches. It may have been only my fancy that she repined because she had a cheek no more bearded than a rose's.

Would you wish your own daughter, madam, to have a smooth cheek, a modest air, and a gentle feminine behaviour, or to be—I won't say a whiskered prodigy, like this Bearded Lady of Kentucky—but a masculine wonder, a virago, a female personage of more than female strength, courage, wisdom? Some authors, who shall be nameless, are, I know, accused of depicting the most feeble, brainless, namby-pamby heroines, for ever whimpering tears and prattling commonplaces. *You* would have the heroine of your novel so beautiful that she should charm the captain (or hero, whoever he may be) with her appearance; surprise and confound the bishop with her learning; outride the squire and get the brush, and, when he fell from his horse, whip out a lancet and bleed him; rescue from fever and death the poor cottager's family whom the doctor had given up; make twenty-one at the butts with the rifle, when the poor captain only scored eighteen; give him twenty in fifty at billiards and beat him; and draw tears from the professional Italian people by her exquisite performance (of voice and violoncello) in the

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evening;—I say, if a novelist would be popular with ladies—the great novel-readers of the world—this is the sort of heroine who would carry him through half-a-dozen editions. Suppose I had asked that Bearded Lady to sing? Confess, now, miss, you would not have been displeased if I had told you that she had a voice like Lablache, only ever so much lower.

My dear, you would like to be a heroine? You would like to travel in triumphal caravans; to see your effigy placarded on city walls; to have your levées attended by admiring crowds, all crying out, "Was there ever such a wonder of a woman?" You would like admiration? Consider the tax you pay for it. You would be alone were you eminent. Were you so distinguished from your neighbours—I will not say by a beard and whiskers, that were odious—but by a great and remarkable intellectual superiority—would you, do you think, be any the happier? Consider envy. Consider solitude. Consider the jealousy and torture of mind which this Kentucky lady must feel, suppose she should hear that there is, let us say, a Missouri prodigy, with a beard larger than hers. Consider how she is separated from her kind by the possession of that wonder of a beard. When that beard grows grey, how lonely she will be, the poor old thing! If it falls off, the public admiration falls off too; and how she will miss it—the compliments of the trumpeters, the admiration of the crowd, the gilded progress of the car. I see an old woman alone in a decrepit old caravan, with cobwebs on the knocker, with a blistered ensign flapping idly over the door. Would you like to be that deserted person? Ah, Chloe! To be good, to be simple, to be modest, to be loved, be thy lot. Be thankful thou art not taller, nor stronger, nor richer, nor wiser than the rest of the world!

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ON LETTS'S DIARY

MINE is one of your No. 12 diaries, three shillings cloth boards; silk limp, gilt edges, three-and-six; French morocco, tuck ditto, four-and-six. It has two pages, ruled with faint lines for memoranda, for every week, and a ruled account at the end, for the twelve months from January to December, where you may set down your incomings and your expenses. I hope yours, my respected reader, are large; that there are many fine round sums of figures on each side of the page: liberal on the expenditure side, greater still on the receipt. I hope, sir, you will be "a better man," as they say, in '62 than in this moribund '61, whose career of life is just coming to its terminus. A better man in purse? in body? in soul's health? Amen, good sir, in all. Who is there so good in mind, body, or estate, but bettering won't still be good for him? O unknown Fate, presiding over next year, if you will give me better health, a better appetite, a better digestion, a better income, a better temper in '62 than you have bestowed in '61, I think your servant will be the better for the changes. For instance, I should be the better for a new coat. This one, I acknowledge, is very old. The family says so. My good friend, who amongst us would not be the better if he would give up some old habits? Yes, yes. You agree with me. You take the allegory? Alas! at our time of life we don't like to give up those old habits, do we? It is ill to change. There is the good old loose easy slovenly bedgown, laziness, for example. What man of sense likes to fling it off and put on a tight *guindé* prim dress-coat that pinches him? There is the cosy wraprascal, self-indulgence—how easy it is! How warm! How it always seems to fit! You can walk out in it; you can go down to dinner in it. You can say of such what Tully says of his books: *Pernoctat nobiscum, peregrinatur, rusticatur.* It is a little slatternly—it is a good deal stained—it isn't becoming—it smells of cigar-smoke; but, *allons donc!* let the world call me idle and sloven. I love my ease better than my neighbour's opinion. I live to please myself; not you, Mr. Dandy, with your supercilious airs. I am a philosopher. Perhaps I live in my tub, and don't make

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any other use of it—— We won't pursue further this unsavoury metaphor; but, with regard to some of your old habits, let us say—

1. The habit of being censorious, and speaking ill of your neighbours.

2. The habit of getting into a passion with your man-servant, your maid-servant, your daughter, wife, &c.

3. The habit of indulging too much at table.

4. The habit of smoking in the dining-room after dinner.

5. The habit of spending insane sums of money in *bric-à-brac*, tall copies, binding, Elzevirs, &c.; '20 Port, outrageously fine horses, ostentatious entertainments, and what not. Or,

6. The habit of screwing meanly, when rich, and chuckling over the saving of half-a-crown, whilst you are poisoning your friends and family with bad wine.

7. The habit of going to sleep immediately after dinner, instead of cheerfully entertaining Mrs. Jones and the family. Or,

8. LADIES! The habit of running up bills with the milliners, and swindling paterfamilias on the house bills.

9. The habit of keeping him waiting for breakfast.

10. The habit of sneering at Mrs. Brown and the Miss Browns, because they are not quite *du monde*, or quite so genteel as Lady Smith.

11. The habit of keeping your wretched father up at balls till five o'clock in the morning, when he has to be at his office at eleven.

12. The habit of fighting with each other, dear Louisa, Jane, Arabella, Amelia.

13. The habit of *always* ordering John Coachman three-quarters of an hour before you want him.

Such habits, I say, sir or madam, if you have had to note in your diary of '61, I have not the slightest doubt, you will enter in your pocket-book of '62. There are habits Nos. 4 and 7, for example. I am morally sure that some of us will not give up those bad customs, though the women cry out and grumble, and scold ever so justly. There are habits Nos. 9 and 13. I feel perfectly certain, my dear young ladies, that you will continue to keep John Coachman waiting; that you will continue to give the most satisfactory reasons for keeping him waiting: and as for (9), you will show that you once (on the 1st of April last, let us say) came to breakfast first, and that you are *always* first in consequence.

Yes; in our '62 diaries, I fear we may all of us make some of the '61 entries. There is my friend Freehand, for instance. (Aha! Master Freehand, how you will laugh to find yourself here!)

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F. is in the habit of spending a little, ever so little, more than his income. He shows you how Mrs. Freehand works, and works (and indeed, Jack Freehand, if you say she is an angel, you don't say too much of her); how they toil, and how they mend, and patch, and pinch; and how they *can't* live on their means. And I very much fear—nay, I will bet him half a bottle of Gladstone 14s. per dozen claret—that the account which is a little on the wrong side this year, will be a little on the wrong side in the next ensuing year of grace.

A diary. Dies. Hodie. How queer to read are some of the entries in the journal! Here are the records of dinners eaten, and gone the way of flesh. The lights burn blue somehow, and we sit before the ghosts of victuals. Hark at the dead jokes resurging! Memory greets them with the ghost of a smile. Here are the lists of the individuals who have dined at your own humble table. The agonies endured before and during those entertainments are renewed, and smart again. What a failure that special grand dinner was! How those dreadful occasional waiters did break the old china! What a dismal hash poor Mary, the cook, made of the French dish which she *would* try out of Francatelli! How angry Mrs. Pope was at not going down to dinner before Mrs. Bishop! How Trimalchio sneered at your absurd attempt to give a feast; and Harpagon cried out at your extravagance and ostentation! How Lady Almack bullied the other ladies in the drawing-room (when no gentlemen were present): never asked you back to dinner again: left her card by her footman: and took not the slightest notice of your wife and daughters at Lady Hustleby's assembly! On the other hand, how easy, cosy, merry, comfortable, those little dinners were; got up at one or two days' notice; when everybody was contented; the soup as clear as amber; the wine as good as Trimalchio's own; and the people kept their carriages waiting, and would not go away till midnight!

Along with the catalogue of bygone pleasures, balls, banquets, and the like, which the pages record, comes a list of much more important occurrences, and remembrances of graver import. On two days of Dives's diary are printed notices that "Dividends are due at the Bank." Let us hope, dear sir, that this announcement considerably interests you; in which case, probably, you have no need of the almanack-maker's printed reminder. If you look over poor Jack Reckless's note-book, amongst his memoranda of racing odds given and taken, perhaps you may read:—"Nabbam's bill due 29th September, £142, 15s. 6d." Let us trust, as the day has passed, that the little transaction here noted has been satisfactorily terminated. If you are paterfamilias, and a worthy kind gentle-

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man, no doubt you have marked down on your register, 17th December (say), "Boys come home." Ah, how carefully that blessed day is marked in *their* little calendars! In my time it used to be, Wednesday, 13th November, "5 *weeks from the holidays;*" Wednesday, 20th November, "4 *weeks from the holidays;*" until sluggish time sped on, and we came to WEDNESDAY, 18TH DECEMBER. Oh rapture! Do you remember pea-shooters? I think we only had them on going home for holidays from private schools—at public schools men are too dignified. And then came that glorious announcement, Wednesday, 27th, "Papa took us to the pantomime;" or if not papa, perhaps you condescended to go to the pit, under charge of the footman.

That was near the end of the year—and mamma gave you a new pocket-book, perhaps, with a little coin, God bless her, in the pocket. And that pocket-book was for next year, you know; and in that pocket-book you had to write down that sad day, Wednesday, January 24th, eighteen hundred and never mind what,—when Doctor Birch's young friends were expected to re-assemble.

Ah me! Every person who turns this page over has his own little diary, in paper or ruled in his memory tablets, and in which are set down the transactions of the now dying year. Boys and men, we have our calendar, mothers and maidens. For example, in your calendar pocket-book, my good Eliza, what a sad sad day that is—how fondly and bitterly remembered—when your boy went off to his regiment, to India, to danger, to battle perhaps. What a day was that last day at home, when the tall brother sat yet amongst the family, the little ones round about him wondering at saddle-boxes, uniforms, sword-cases, gun-cases, and other wondrous apparatus of war and travel which poured in and filled the hall; the new dressing-case for the beard not yet grown; the great sword-case at which little brother Tom looks so admiringly! What a dinner that was, that last dinner, when little and grown children assembled together, and all tried to be cheerful! What a night was that last night, when the young ones were at roost for the last time together under the same roof, and the mother lay alone in her chamber counting the fatal hours as they tolled one after another, amidst her tears, her watching, her fond prayers. What a night that was, and yet how quickly the melancholy dawn came! Only too soon the sun rose over the houses. And now in a moment more the city seemed to wake. The house began to stir. The family gathers together for the last meal. For the last time in the midst of them the widow kneels amongst her kneeling children, and falters a prayer in which she commits her dearest,

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her eldest born, to the care of the Father of all. O night, what tears you hide—what prayers you hear! And so the nights pass and the days succeed, until that one comes when tears and parting shall be no more.

In your diary, as in mine, there are days marked with sadness, not for this year only, but for all. On a certain day—and the sun perhaps shining ever so brightly—the house-mother comes down to her family, with a sad face, which scares the children round about in the midst of their laughter and prattle. They may have forgotten—but she has not—a day which came, twenty years ago it may be, and which she remembers only too well: the long night-watch; the dreadful dawning and the rain beating at the pane; the infant speechless, but moaning in its little crib; and then the awful calm, the awful smile on the sweet cherub face, when the cries have ceased, and the little suffering breast heaves no more. Then the children, as they see their mother's face, remember this was the day on which their little brother died. It was before they were born; but she remembers it. And as they pray together, it seems almost as if the spirit of the little lost one was hovering round the group. So they pass away: friends, kindred, the dearest-loved, grown people, aged, infants. As we go on the downhill journey, the milestones are gravestones, and on each more and more names are written; unless haply you live beyond man's common age, when friends have dropped off, and, tottering, and feeble, and unpitied, you reach the terminus alone.

In this past year's diary is there any precious day noted on which you have made a new friend? This is a piece of good fortune bestowed but grudgingly on the old. After a certain age a new friend is a wonder, like Sarah's child. Aged persons are seldom capable of bearing friendships. Do you remember how warmly you loved Jack and Tom when you were at school; what a passionate regard you had for Ned when you were at college, and the immense letters you wrote to each other? How often do you write, now that postage costs nothing? There is the age of blossoms and sweet budding green; the age of generous summer; the autumn when the leaves drop; and then winter, shivering and bare. Quick, children, and sit at my feet: for they are cold, very cold: and it seems as if neither wine nor worsted will warm 'em.

In this past year's diary is there any dismal day noted in which you have lost a friend? In mine there is. I do not mean by death. Those who are gone, you have. Those who departed loving you, love you still; and you love them always. They are not really gone, those dear hearts and true; they are only gone into the next room; and you will presently get up and follow them, and yonder

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door will close upon *you*, and you will be no more seen. As I am in this cheerful mood, I will tell you a fine and touching story of a doctor which I heard lately. About two years since there was, in our or some other city, a famous doctor, into whose consulting-room crowds came daily, so that they might be healed. Now this doctor had a suspicion that there was something vitally wrong with himself, and he went to consult another famous physician at Dublin, or it may be at Edinburgh. And he of Edinburgh punched his comrade's sides; and listened at his heart and lungs; and felt his pulse, I suppose; and looked at his tongue; and when he had done, Doctor London said to Doctor Edinburgh, "Doctor, how long have I to live?" And Doctor Edinburgh said to Doctor London, "Doctor, you may last a year."

Then Doctor London came home, knowing that what Doctor Edinburgh said was true. And he made up his accounts, with man and Heaven, I trust. And he visited his patients as usual. And he went about healing, and cheering, and soothing and doctoring; and thousands of sick people were benefited by him. And he said not a word to his family at home; but lived amongst them cheerful and tender, and calm, and loving; though he knew the night was at hand when he should see them and work no more.

And it was winter time, and they came and told him that some man at a distance—very sick, but very rich—wanted him; and, though Doctor London knew that he was himself at death's door, he went to the sick man; for he knew the large fee would be good for his children after him. And he died; and his family never knew, until he was gone, that he had been long aware of the inevitable doom.

This is a cheerful carol for Christmas, is it not? You see, in regard to these Roundabout discourses, I never know whether they are to be merry or dismal. My hobby has the bit in his mouth; goes his own way; and sometimes trots through a park, and sometimes paces by a cemetery. Two days since came the printer's little emissary, with a note saying, "We are waiting for the Roundabout Paper!" A Roundabout Paper about what or whom? How stale it has become, that printed jollity about Christmas! Carols, and wassail-bowls, and holly, and mistletoe, and yule-logs *de commande*—what heaps of these have we not had for years past! Well, year after year the season comes. Come frost, come thaw, come snow, come rain, year after year my neighbour the parson has to make his sermon. They are getting together the bonbons, iced cakes, Christmas trees at Fortnum and Mason's now. The genii of the theatres are composing the Christmas pantomime, which our young folk will see and note anon in their little diaries.

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A SENTENCE

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And now, brethren, may I conclude this discourse with an extract out of that great diary, the newspaper? I read it but yesterday, and it has mingled with all my thoughts since then. Here are the two paragraphs, which appeared following each other:—

"Mr. R., the Advocate-General of Calcutta, has been appointed to the post of Legislative Member of the Council of the Governor-General."

"Sir R. S., Agent to the Governor-General for Central India, died on the 29th of October, of bronchitis."

These two men, whose different fates are recorded in two paragraphs and half-a-dozen lines of the same newspaper, were sisters' sons. In one of the stories by the present writer, a man is described tottering "up the steps of the ghaut," having just parted with his child, whom he is despatching to England from India. I wrote this, remembering in long long distant days, such a ghaut, or river-stair, at Calcutta; and a day when, down those steps, to a boat which was in waiting, came two children, whose mothers remained on the shore. One of those ladies was never to see her boy more; and he, too, is just dead in India, "of bronchitis, on the 29th October." We were first-cousins; had been little playmates and friends from the time of our birth; and the first house in London to which I was taken, was that of our aunt, the mother of his Honour the Member of Council. His Honour was even then a gentleman of the long robe, being, in truth, a baby in arms. We Indian children were consigned to a school of which our deluded parents had heard a favourable report, but which was governed by a horrible little tyrant, who made our young lives so miserable that I remember kneeling by my little bed of a night, and saying, "Pray God, I may dream of my mother!" Thence we went to a public school; and my cousin to Addiscombe and to India.

"For thirty-two years," the paper says, "Sir Richmond Shakespear faithfully and devotedly served the Government of India, and during that period but once visited England, for a few months and on public duty. In his military capacity he saw much service, was present in eight general engagements, and was badly wounded in the last. In 1840, when a young lieutenant, he had the rare good fortune to be the means of rescuing from almost hopeless slavery in Khiva 416 subjects of the Emperor of Russia; and, but two years later, greatly contributed to the happy recovery of our own prisoners from a similar fate in Cabul. Throughout his career this officer

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was ever ready and zealous for the public service, and freely risked life and liberty in the discharge of his duties. Lord Canning, to mark his high sense of Sir Richmond Shakespear's public services, had lately offered him the Chief Commissionership of Mysore, which he had accepted, and was about to undertake, when death terminated his career."

When he came to London the cousins and playfellows of early Indian days met once again, and shook hands. "Can I do anything for you?" I remember the kind fellow asking. He was always asking that question: of all kinsmen; of all widows and orphans; of all the poor; of young men who might need his purse or his service. I saw a young officer yesterday to whom the first words Sir Richmond Shakespear wrote on his arrival in India were, "Can I do anything for you?" His purse was at the command of all. His kind hand was always open. It was a gracious fate which sent him to rescue widows and captives. Where could they have had a champion more chivalrous, a protector more loving and tender?

I write down his name in my little book, among those of others dearly loved, who, too, have been summoned hence. And so we meet and part; we struggle and succeed; or we fail and drop unknown on the way. As we leave the fond mother's knee, the rough trials of childhood and boyhood begin; and then manhood is upon us, and the battle of life, with its chances, perils, wounds, defeats, distinctions. And Fort William guns are saluting in one man's honour,* while the troops are firing the last volleys over the other's grave—over the grave of the brave, the gentle, the faithful Christian soldier.

* W. R. obiit March 22, 1862.

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ON HALF A LOAF

A LETTER TO MESSRS. BROADWAY, BATTERY & CO., OF NEW YORK, BANKERS

IS it all over? May we lock up the case of instruments? Have we signed our wills; settled up our affairs; pretended to talk and rattle quite cheerfully to the women at dinner, so that they should not be alarmed; sneaked away under some pretext, and looked at the children sleeping in their beds with their little unconscious thumbs in their mouths, and a flush on the soft-pillowed cheek; made every arrangement with Colonel MacTurk, who acts as our second, and knows the other principal a great deal too well to think he will ever give in; invented a monstrous figment about going to shoot pheasants with Mac in the morning, so as to soothe the anxious fears of the dear mistress of the house; early as the hour appointed for the—the little affair—was, have we been awake hours and hours sooner; risen before daylight, with a faint hope, perhaps, that MacTurk might have come to some arrangement with the other side; at seven o'clock (confound his punctuality!) heard his cab-wheel at the door, and let him in looking perfectly trim, fresh, jolly, and well shaved; driven off with him in the cold morning, after a very unsatisfactory breakfast of coffee and stale bread-and-butter (which choke, somehow, in the swallowing); driven off to Wormwood Scrubs in the cold, muddy, misty, moonshiny morning; stepped out of the cab, where Mac has bid the man to halt on a retired spot in the common; in one minute more, seen another cab arrive, from which descend two gentlemen, one of whom has a case like MacTurk's under his arm;—looked round and round the solitude, and seen not one single sign of a policeman—no, no more than in a row in London;—deprecated the horrible necessity which drives civilised men to the use of powder and bullet;—taken ground as firmly as may be, and looked on whilst Mac is neatly loading his weapons; and when all was ready, and one looked for the decisive One, Two, Three—have we ever heard Captain O'Toole (the second of the other principal) walk up, and say: "Colonel MacTurk, I am

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desired by my principal to declare at this eleventh—this twelfth hour, that he is willing to own that he sees HE HAS BEEN WRONG in the dispute which has arisen between him and your friend; that he apologises for offensive expressions which he has used in the heat of the quarrel; and regrets the course he has taken"? If something like this has happened to you, however great your courage, you have been glad not to fight;—however accurate your aim, you have been pleased not to fire.

On the sixth day of January in this year sixty-two, what hundreds of thousands—I may say, what millions of Englishmen, were in the position of the personage here sketched—Christian men, I hope, shocked at the dreadful necessity of battle; aware of the horrors which the conflict must produce, and yet feeling that the moment was come, and that there was no arbitrament left but that of steel and cannon! My reader, perhaps, has been in America. If he has, he knows what good people are to be found there; how polished, how generous, how gentle, how courteous. But it is not the voices of these you hear in the roar of hate, defiance, folly, falsehood, which comes to us across the Atlantic. You can't hear gentle voices; very many who could speak are afraid. Men must go forward, or be crushed by the maddened crowd behind them. I suppose after the perpetration of that act of—what shall we call it?—of sudden war, which Wilkes did, and Everett approved, most of us believed that battle was inevitable. Who has not read the American papers for six weeks past? Did you ever think the United States Government would give up those Commissioners? I never did, for my part. It seems to me the United States Government have done the most courageous act of the war. Before that act was done, what an excitement prevailed in London! In every Club there was a parliament sitting in permanence: in every domestic gathering this subject was sure to form the main part of the talk. Of course I have seen many people who have travelled in America, and heard them on this matter—friends of the South, friends of the North, friends of peace, and American stock-holders in plenty.—"They will never give up the men, sir," that was the opinion on all sides; and, if they would not, we knew what was to happen.

For weeks past this nightmare of war has been riding us. The City was already gloomy enough. When a great domestic grief and misfortune visits the chief person of the State, the heart of the people, too, is sad and awe-stricken. It might be this sorrow and trial were but presages of greater trials and sorrow to come. What if the sorrow of war is to be added to the other calamity? Such forebodings have formed the theme of many a man's talk, and darkened many a fireside. Then came the rapid orders for ships to

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arm and troops to depart. How many of us have had to say farewell to friends whom duty called away with their regiments; on whom we strove to look cheerfully, as we shook their hands, it might be for the last time; and whom our thoughts depicted, treading the snows of the immense Canadian frontier, where their intrepid little band might have to face the assaults of other enemies than winter and rough weather! I went to a play one night, and protest I hardly know what was the entertainment which passed before my eyes. In the next stall was an American gentleman, who knew me. "Good heavens, sir!" I thought, "is it decreed that you and I are to be authorised to murder each other next week; that my people shall be bombarding your cities, destroying your navies, making a hideous desolation of your coast; that our peaceful frontiers shall be subject to fire, rapine, and murder?" "They will never give up the men," said the Englishman. "They will never give up the men," said the American. And the Christmas piece which the actors were playing proceeded like a piece in a dream. To make the grand comic performance doubly comic, my neighbour presently informed me how one of the best friends I had in America —the most hospitable, kindly, amiable of men, from whom I had twice received the warmest welcome and the most delightful hospitality—was a prisoner in Fort Warren, on charges by which his life perhaps might be risked. I think that was the most dismal Christmas fun which these eyes ever looked on.

Carry out that notion a little farther, and depict ten thousand, a hundred thousand homes in England saddened by the thought of the coming calamity, and oppressed by the pervading gloom. My next-door neighbour perhaps has parted with her son. Now the ship in which he is, with a thousand brave comrades, is ploughing through the stormy midnight ocean. Presently (under a flag we know of) the thin red line in which her boy forms a speck, is winding its way through the vast Canadian snows. Another neighbour's boy is not gone, but is expecting orders to sail; and some one else, besides the circle at home maybe, is in prayer and terror, thinking of the summons which calls the young sailor away. By firesides modest and splendid, all over the three kingdoms, that sorrow is keeping watch, and myriads of hearts beating with that thought, "Will they give up the men?"

I don't know how, on the first day after the capture of the Southern Commissioners was announced, a rumour got abroad in London that the taking of the men was an act according to law, of which our nation could take no notice. It was said that the law authorities had so declared, and a very noble testimony to the *loyalty* of Englishmen, I think, was shown by the instant submission

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of high-spirited gentlemen, most keenly feeling that the nation had been subject to a coarse outrage, who were silent when told that the law was with the aggressor. The relief which presently came, when, after a pause of a day, we found that law was on our side, was indescribable. The nation *might* then take notice of this insult to its honour. Never were people more eager than ours when they found they had a right to reparation.

I have talked during the last week with many English holders of American securities, who, of course, have been aware of the threat held over them. "England," says the *New York Herald*, "cannot afford to go to war with us, for six hundred millions' worth of American stock is owned by British subjects, which, in event of hostilities, would be confiscated; and we now call upon the Companies not to take it off their hands on any terms. *Let its forfeiture be held over England as a weapon in terrorem.* British subjects have two or three hundred millions of dollars invested in shipping and other property in the United States. All this property, together with the stocks, would be seized, amounting to nine hundred millions of dollars. Will England incur this tremendous loss for a mere abstraction?"

Whether "a mere abstraction" here means the abstraction of the two Southern Commissioners from under our flag, or the abstract idea of injured honour, which seems ridiculous to the *Herald*, it is needless to ask. I have spoken with many men who have money invested in the States, but I declare I have not met one English gentleman whom the publication of this threat has influenced for a moment. Our people have nine hundred millions of dollars invested in the United States, have they? And the *Herald* "calls upon the Companies" not to take any of this debt off our hands. Let us, on our side, entreat the English press to give this announcement every publicity. Let us do everything in our power to make this "call upon the Americans" well known in England. I hope English newspaper editors will print it, and print it again and again. It is not we who say this of American citizens; but American citizens who say this of themselves. "Bull is odious. We can't bear Bull. He is haughty, arrogant, a braggart, and a blusterer; and we can't bear brag and bluster in our modest and decorous country. We hate Bull, and if he quarrels with us on a point in which we are in the wrong, we have goods of his in our custody, and we will rob him!" Suppose your London banker saying to you, "Sir, I have always thought your manners disgusting, and your arrogance insupportable. You dare to complain of my conduct because I have wrongfully imprisoned Jones. My answer to your vulgar interference is, that I confiscate your balance!"

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What would be an English merchant's character after a few such transactions? It is not improbable that the moralists of the *Herald* would call him a rascal. Why have the United States been paying seven, eight, ten per cent. for money for years past, when the same commodity can be got elsewhere at half that rate of interest? Why, because though among the richest proprietors in the world, creditors were not sure of them. So the States have had to pay eighty millions yearly for the use of money which would cost other borrowers but thirty. Add up this item of extra interest alone for a dozen years, and see what a prodigious penalty the States have been paying for repudiation here and there, for sharp practice, for doubtful credit. Suppose the peace is kept between us, the remembrance of this last threat alone will cost the States millions and millions more. If they must have money, we must have a greater interest to ensure our jeopardised capital. Do American Companies want to borrow money—as want to borrow they will? Mr. Brown, show the gentleman that extract from the *New York Herald*, which declares that the United States will confiscate private property in the event of a war. As the country newspapers say, "Please, country papers, copy this paragraph." And, gentlemen in America, when the honour of *your* nation is called in question, please to remember that it is the American press which glories in announcing that you are prepared to be rogues.

And when this war has drained uncounted hundreds of millions more out of the United States exchequer, will they be richer or more inclined to pay debts, or less willing to evade them, or more popular with their creditors, or more likely to get money from men whom they deliberately announce that they will cheat? I have not followed the *Herald* on the "stone-ship" question—that great naval victory appears to me not less horrible and wicked than suicidal. Block the harbours for ever; destroy the inlets of the commerce of the world; perish cities,—so that we may wreak an injury on them. It is the talk of madmen, but not the less wicked. The act injures the whole Republic: but it is perpetrated. It is to deal harm to ages hence; but it is done. The Indians of old used to burn women and their unborn children. This stone-ship business is Indian warfare. And it is performed by men who tell us every week that they are at the head of civilisation, and that the Old World is decrepit, and cruel, and barbarous as compared to theirs.

The same politicians who throttle commerce at its neck, and threaten to confiscate trust-money, say that when the war is over, and the South is subdued, then the turn of the old country will come, and a direful retribution shall be taken for our conduct.

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This has been the cry all through the war. "We should have conquered the South," says an American paper which I read this very day, "but for England." Was there ever such puling heard from men who have an army of a million, and who turn and revile a people who have stood as aloof from their contest as they have from the war of Troy? Or is it an outcry made with malice prepense? And is the song of the *New York Times* a variation of the *Herald* tune?—"The conduct of the British, in folding their arms and taking no part in the fight, has been so base that it has caused the prolongation of the war, and occasioned a prodigious expense on our part. Therefore, as we have British property in our hands, we &c. &c." The lamb troubled the water dreadfully, and the wolf, in a righteous indignation, "confiscated" him. Of course we have heard that at an undisturbed time Great Britain would never have dared to press its claim for redress. Did the United States wait until we were at peace with France before they went to war with us last? Did Mr. Seward yield the claim which he confesses to be just, until he himself was menaced with war? How long were the Southern gentlemen kept in prison? What caused them to be set free? and did the Cabinet of Washington see its error before or after the demand for redress?* The captor was feasted at Boston, and the captives in prison hard by. If the wrongdoer was to be punished, it was Captain Wilkes who ought to have gone into limbo. At any rate, as "the Cabinet of Washington could not give its approbation to the commander of the *San Jacinto*," why were the men not sooner set free? To sit at Tremont House, and hear the captain after dinner give his opinion on international law, would have been better sport for the prisoners than the grim *salle-à-manger* at Fort Warren.

I read in the commercial news brought by the *Teutonia*, and

* "At the beginning of December the British fleet on the West Indian station mounted 850 guns, and comprised five liners, ten first-class frigates, and seventeen powerful corvettes. . . . In little more than a month the fleet available for operations on the American shore had been more than doubled. The reinforcements prepared at the various dockyards included two line-of-battle ships, twenty-nine magnificent frigates—such as the *Shannon*, the *Sutlej*, the *Euryalus*, the *Orlando*, the *Galatea;* eight corvettes, armed like the frigates in part, with 100- and 40- pounder Armstrong guns; and the two tremendous iron-cased ships, the *Warrior* and the *Black Prince;* and their smaller sisters the *Resistance* and the *Defence*. There was work to be done which might have delayed the commission of a few of these ships for some weeks longer; but if the United States had chosen war instead of peace, the blockade of their coasts would have been supported by a steam fleet of more than sixty splendid ships, armed with 1800 guns, many of them of the heaviest and most effective kind."—*Saturday Review:* Jan. 11.

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published in London on the present 13th January, that the pork market was generally quiet on the 29th December last; that lard, though with more activity, was heavy and decidedly lower: and at Philadelphia, whisky is steady and stocks firm. Stocks are firm: that is a comfort for the English holders, and the confiscating process recommended by the *Herald* is at least deferred. But presently comes an announcement which is not quite so cheering:—"The Saginaw Central Railway Company (let us call it) has postponed its January dividend on account of the disturbed condition of public affairs."

A la bonne heure. The bond- and share-holders of the Saginaw must look for loss and depression in times of war. This is one of war's dreadful taxes and necessities: and all sorts of innocent people must suffer by the misfortune. The corn was high at Waterloo when a hundred and fifty thousand men came and trampled it down on a Sabbath morning. There was no help for that calamity, and the Belgian farmers lost their crops for the year. Perhaps I am a farmer myself—an innocent *colonus;* and instead of being able to get to church with my family, have to see squadrons of French dragoons thundering upon my barley, and squares of English infantry forming and trampling all over my oats. (By the way, in writing of "Panics," an ingenious writer in the *Atlantic Magazine* says that the British panics at Waterloo were frequent and notorious.) Well, I am a Belgian peasant, and I see the British running away and the French cutting the fugitives down. What have I done that these men should be kicking down my peaceful harvest for me, on which I counted to pay my rent, to feed my horses, my household, my children? It is hard. But it is the fortune of war. But suppose the battle over; the Frenchman says, "You scoundrel! why did you not take a part with me? and why did you stand like a double-faced traitor looking on? I should have won the battle but for you. And I hereby confiscate the farm you stand on, and you and your family may go to the workhouse."

The New York press holds this argument over English people *in terrorem.* "We Americans may be ever so wrong in the matter in dispute, but if you push us to a war, we will confiscate your English property." Very good. It is peace now. Confidence of course is restored between us. Our eighteen hundred peace commissioners have no occasion to open their mouths; and the little question of confiscation is postponed. Messrs. Battery, Broadway & Co., of New York, have the kindness to sell my Saginaws for what they will fetch. I shall lose half my loaf very likely; but for the sake of a quiet life, let us give up a certain quantity of farinaceous food; and half a loaf, you know, is better than no bread at all.

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THE NOTCH ON THE AXE.—A STORY À LA MODE

Part I

EVERY one remembers in the Fourth Book of the immortal poem of your Blind Bard (to whose sightless orbs no doubt Glorious Shapes were apparent, and Visions Celestial), how Adam discourses to Eve of the Bright Visitors who hovered round their Eden—

> "'Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
> Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.'

"'How often,' says Father Adam, 'from the steep of echoing hill or thicket, have we heard celestial voices to the midnight air, sole, or responsive to each other's notes, singing!' After the Act of Disobedience, when the erring pair from Eden took their solitary way, and went forth to toil and trouble on common earth—though the Glorious Ones no longer were visible, you cannot say they were gone. It was not that the Bright Ones were absent, but that the dim eyes of rebel man no longer could see them. ' In your chamber hangs a picture of one whom you never knew, but whom you have long held in tenderest regard, and who was painted for you by a friend of mine, the Knight of Plympton. She communes with you. She smiles on you. When your spirits are low, her bright eyes shine on you and cheer you. Her innocent sweet smile is a caress to you. She never fails to soothe you with her speechless prattle. You love her. She is alive with you. As you extinguish your candle and turn to sleep, though your eyes see her not, is she not there still smiling? As you lie in the night awake, and thinking of your duties, and the morrow's inevitable toil oppressing the busy, weary, wakeful brain as with a remorse, the crackling fire flashes up for a moment in the grate, and she is there, your little Beauteous Maiden, smiling with her sweet eyes! When moon is down, when fire is out, when curtains are drawn, when lids are closed, is she not there, the little Beautiful One, though invisible, present and

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smiling still? Friend, the Unseen Ones are round about us. Does it not seem as if the time were drawing near when it shall be given to men to behold them?"

The print of which my friend spoke, and which, indeed, hangs in my room, though he has never been there, is that charming little winter piece of Sir Joshua, representing the little Lady Caroline Montague, afterwards Duchess of Buccleuch. She is represented as standing in the midst of a winter landscape, wrapped in muff and cloak; and she looks out of her picture with a smile so exquisite that a Herod could not see her without being charmed.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. PINTO," I said to the person with whom I was conversing. (I wonder, by the way, that I was not surprised at his knowing how fond I am of this print.) "You spoke of the Knight of Plympton. Sir Joshua died, 1792: and you say he was your dear friend?"

As I spoke I chanced to look at Mr. Pinto; and then it suddenly struck me: Gracious powers! Perhaps you *are* a hundred years old, now I think of it. You look more than a hundred. Yes, you may be a thousand years old for what I know. Your teeth are false. One eye is evidently false. Can I say that the other is not? If a man's age may be calculated by the rings round his eyes, this man may be as old as Methuselah. He has no beard. He wears a large curly glossy brown wig, and his eyebrows are painted a deep olive-green. It was odd to hear this man, this walking mummy, talking sentiment, in these queer old chambers in Shepherd's Inn.

Pinto passed a yellow bandanna handkerchief over his awful white teeth, and kept his glass eye steadily fixed on me. "Sir Joshua's friend?" said he (you perceive, eluding my direct question). "Is not every one that knows his pictures Reynolds's friend? Suppose I tell you that I have been in his painting-room scores of times, and that his sister Thé has made me tea, and his sister Toffy has made coffee for me? You will only say I am an old ombog." (Mr. Pinto, I remarked, spoke all languages with an accent equally foreign.) "Suppose I tell you that I knew Mr. Sam Johnson, and did not like him? that I was at that very ball at Madame Cornelis' which you have mentioned in one of your little—what do you call them?—bah! my memory begins to fail me—in one of your little Whirligig Papers? Suppose I tell you that Sir Joshua has been here, in this very room?"

"Have you, then, had these apartments for—more—than—seventy years?" I asked.

"They look as if they had not been swept for that time—don't they? Hey? I did not say that I had them for seventy years, but that Sir Joshua had visited me here."

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"When?" I asked, eyeing the man sternly, for I began to think he was an impostor.

He answered me with a glance still more stern: "Sir Joshua Reynolds was here this very morning, with Angelica Kaufmann and Mr. Oliver Goldschmidt. He is still very much attached to Angelica, who still does not care for him. Because he is dead (and I was in the fourth mourning coach at his funeral) is that any reason why he should not come back to earth again? My good sir, you are laughing at me. He has sat many a time on that very chair which you are occupying. There are several spirits in the room now, whom you cannot see. Excuse me." Here he turned round as if he was addressing somebody, and began rapidly speaking a language unknown to me. "It is Arabic," he said; "a bad patois I own. I learned it in Barbary, when I was a prisoner amongst the Moors. In anno 1609, bin ick aldus ghekledt gheghaen. Ha! you doubt me: look at me well. At least I am like——"

Perhaps some of my readers remember a paper of which the figure of a man carrying a log formed the initial letter, and which I copied from an old spoon now in my possession. As I looked at Mr. Pinto I do declare he looked so like the figure on that old piece of plate that I started and felt very uneasy. "Ha!" said he, laughing through his false teeth (I declare they were false—I could see utterly toothless gums working up and down behind the pink coral), "you see I wore a beard den; I am shafed now; perhaps you tink I am *a spoon*. Ha, ha!" And as he laughed he gave a cough which I thought would have coughed his teeth out, his glass eye out, his wig off, his very head off; but he stopped this convulsion by stumping across the room and seizing a little bottle of bright pink medicine, which, being opened, spread a singular acrid aromatic odour through the apartment; and I thought I saw—but of this I cannot take an affirmation—a light green and violet flame flickering round the neck of the phial as he opened it. By the way, from the peculiar stumping noise which he made in crossing the bare-boarded apartment, I knew at once that my strange entertainer had a wooden leg. Over the dust which lay quite thick on the boards, you could see the mark of one foot very neat and pretty, and then a round O, which was naturally the impression made by the wooden stump. I own I had a queer thrill as I saw that mark, and felt a secret comfort that it was not *cloven*.

In this desolate apartment in which Mr. Pinto had invited me to see him, there were three chairs, one bottomless, a little table on which you might put a breakfast tray, and not a single other article of furniture. In the next room, the door of which was open, I

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could see a magnificent gilt dressing-case, with some splendid diamond and ruby shirt-studs lying by it, and a chest of drawers, and a cupboard apparently full of clothes.

Remembering him in Baden Baden in great magnificence, I wondered at his present denuded state. "You have a house elsewhere, Mr. Pinto?" I said.

"Many," says he. "I have apartments in many cities. I lock dem up, and do not carry mosh logish."

I then remembered that his apartment at Baden, where I first met him, was bare, and had no bed in it.

"There is, then, a sleeping-room beyond?"

"This is the sleeping-room." (He pronounces it *dis*. Can this, by the way, give any clue to the nationality of this singular man?)

"If you sleep on these two old chairs you have a rickety couch; if on the floor, a dusty one."

"Suppose I sleep up dere?" said this strange man, and he actually pointed up to the ceiling. I thought him mad, or what he himself called "an ombog." "I know. You do not believe me; for why should I deceive you? I came but to propose a matter of business to you. I told you I could give you the clue to the mystery of the Two Children in Black, whom you met at Baden, and you came to see me. If I told you, you would not believe me. What for try and convinz you? Ha, hey?" And he shook his hand once, twice, thrice, at me, and glared at me out of his eye in a peculiar way.

Of what happened now I protest I cannot give an accurate account. It seemed to me that there shot a flame from his eye into my brain, whilst behind his *glass* eye there was a green illumination as if a candle had been lit in it. It seemed to me that from his long fingers two quivering flames issued, sputtering, as it were, which penetrated me, and forced me back into one of the chairs—the broken one—out of which I had much difficulty in scrambling, when the strange glamour was ended. It seemed to me that, when I was so fixed, so transfixed in the broken chair, the man floated up to the ceiling, crossed his legs, folded his arms as if he was lying on a sofa, and grinned down at me. When I came to myself he was down from the ceiling, and, taking me out of the broken cane-bottomed chair, kindly enough—"Bah!" said he, "it is the smell of my medicine. It often gives the vertigo. I thought you would have had a little fit. Come into the open air." And we went down the steps, and into Shepherd's Inn, where the setting sun was just shining on the statue of Shepherd; the laundresses were trapesing about; the porters were leaning against the rail-

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ings; and the clerks were playing at marbles, to my inexpressible consolation.

"You said you were going to dine at the 'Gray's-inn Coffee-house,'" he said. I was. I often dine there. There is excellent wine at the "Gray's-inn Coffee-house;" but I declare I NEVER SAID so. I was not astonished at his remark; no more astonished than if I was in a dream. Perhaps I *was* in a dream. Is life a dream? Are dreams facts? Is sleeping being really awake? I don't know. I tell you I am puzzled. I have read "The Woman in White," "The Strange Story"—not to mention that story "Stranger than Fiction" in the *Cornhill Magazine*—that story for which THREE credible witnesses are ready to vouch. I have had messages from the dead; and not only from the dead, but from people who never existed at all. I own I am in a state of much bewilderment: but, if you please, will proceed with my simple, my artless story.

Well, then. We passed from Shepherd's Inn into Holborn, and looked for a while at Woodgate's bric-à-brac shop, which I never can pass without delaying at the windows—indeed, if I were going to be hanged, I would beg the cart to stop, and let me have one look more at that delightful *omnium gatherum*. And passing Woodgate's, we come to Gale's little shop, "No. 47," which is also a favourite haunt of mine.

Mr. Gale happened to be at his door, and as we exchanged salutations, "Mr. Pinto," I said, "would you like to see a real curiosity in this curiosity shop? Step into Mr. Gale's little back room."

In that little back parlour there are Chinese gongs; there are old Saxe and Sèvres plates; there is Fürstenberg, Carl Theodor, Worcester, Amstel, Nankin and other jimcrockery. And in the corner what do you think there is? There is an actual GUILLOTINE. If you doubt me, go and see—Gale, High Holborn, No. 47. It is a slim instrument, much slighter than those which they make now;—some nine feet high, narrow, a pretty piece of upholstery enough. There is the hook over which the rope used to play which unloosened the dreadful axe above; and look! dropped into the orifice where the head used to go—there is THE AXE itself, all rusty, with A GREAT NOTCH IN THE BLADE.

As Pinto looked at it—Mr. Gale was not in the room, I recollect; happening to have been just called out by a customer who offered him three pound fourteen and sixpence for a blue Shepherd in *pâte tendre*,—Mr. Pinto gave a little start, and seemed *crispé* for a moment. Then he looked steadily towards one of those great porcelain stools which you see in gardens—and—it seemed to me—I tell you I won't take my affidavit—I may have been maddened

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by the six glasses I took of that pink elixir—I may have been sleep-walking: perhaps am as I write now—I may have been under the influence of that astounding MEDIUM into whose hands I had fallen—but I vow I heard Pinto say, with rather a ghastly grin at the porcelain stool,

> "Nay, nefer shague your gory locks at me,
> Dou canst not say I did it."

(He pronounced it, by the way, I *dit* it, by which I *know* that Pinto was a German.)

I heard Pinto say those very words, and sitting on the porcelain stool I saw, dimly at first, then with an awful distinctness—a ghost—an *eidolon*—a form—A HEADLESS MAN seated, with his head in his lap, which wore an expression of piteous surprise.

At this minute, Mr. Gale entered from the front shop to show a customer some delf plates; and he did not see—but *we did*—the figure rise up from the porcelain stool, shake its head, which it held in its hand, and which kept its eyes fixed sadly on us, and disappear behind the guillotine.

"Come to the 'Gray's-inn Coffee-house,'" Pinto said, "and I will tell you how *the notch came to the axe.*" And we walked down Holborn at about thirty-seven minutes past six o'clock.

If there is anything in the above statement which astonishes the reader, I promise him that in the next chapter of this little story he will be astonished still more.

PART II

YOU will excuse me," I said to my companion, "for remarking, that when you addressed the individual sitting on the porcelain stool, with his head in his lap, your ordinarily benevolent features"—(this I confess was a bouncer, for between ourselves a more sinister and ill-looking rascal than Monsieur P. I have seldom set eyes on)—"your ordinarily handsome face wore an expression that was by no means pleasing. You grinned at the individual just as you did at me when you went up to the cei——, pardon me, as I *thought* you did, when I fell down in a fit in your chambers;" and I qualified my words in a great flutter and tremble; I did not care to offend the man—I did not *dare* to offend the man. I thought once or twice of jumping into a cab, and flying; or taking refuge in Day and Martin's Blacking Warehouse; of speak-

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ing to a policeman, but not one would come. I was this man's slave. I followed him like his dog. I *could* not get away from him. So, you see, I went on meanly conversing with him, and affecting a simpering confidence. I remember, when I was a little boy at school, going up fawning and smiling in this way to some great hulking bully of a sixth-form boy. So I said in a word, "Your ordinarily handsome face wore a disagreeable expression," &c.

"It is ordinarily *very* handsome," said he, with such a leer at a couple of passers-by, that one of them cried, "Oh, crikey, here's a precious guy!" and a child, in its nurse's arms, screamed itself into convulsions. "Oh, oui, che suis très-choli garçon, bien peau, cerdainement," continued Mr. Pinto; "but you were right. That—that person was not very well pleased when he saw me. There was no love lost between us, as you say; and the world never knew a more worthless miscreant. I hate him, *voyez-vous?* I hated him alife; I hate him dead. I hate him man; I hate him ghost: and he know it, and tremble before me. If I see him twenty tausend years hence—and why not?—I shall hate him still. You remarked how he was dressed?"

"In black satin breeches and striped stockings; a white piqué waistcoat, a grey coat, with large metal buttons, and his hair in powder. He must have worn a pigtail—only——"

"Only it was *cut off!* Ha, ha, ha!" Mr. Pinto cried, yelling a laugh, which I observed made the policemen stare very much. "Yes. It was cut off by the same blow which took off the scoundrel's head—ho, ho, ho!" And he made a circle with his hook-nailed finger round his own yellow neck, and grinned with a horrible triumph. "I promise you that fellow was surprised when he found his head in the pannier. Ha! ha! Do you ever cease to hate those whom you hate?"—fire flashed terrifically from his glass eye as he spoke—"or to love dose whom you once loved. Oh, never, never!" And here his natural eye was bedewed with tears. "But here we are at the 'Gray's-inn Coffee-house.' James, what is the joint?"

That very respectful and efficient waiter brought in the bill of fare, and I, for my part, chose boiled leg of pork and pease-pudding, which my acquaintance said would do as well as anything else; though I remarked he only trifled with the pease-pudding, and left all the pork on the plate. In fact, he scarcely ate anything. But he drank a prodigious quantity of wine; and I must say that my friend Mr. Hart's port-wine is so good that I myself took—well, I should think, I took three glasses. Yes, three, certainly. *He*—I mean Mr. P.—the old rogue, was insatiable; for we had to call for a second bottle in no time. When that

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was gone, my companion wanted another. A little red mounted up to his yellow cheeks as he drank the wine, and he winked at it in a strange manner. "I remember," said he, musing, "when port-wine was scarcely drunk in this country—though the Queen liked it, and so did Harley! but Bolingbroke didn't—he drank Florence and Champagne. Doctor Swift put water to his wine. 'Jonathan,' I once said to him—— but bah! *autres temps, autres mœurs*. Another magnum, James."

This was all very well. "My good sir," I said, "it may suit *you* to order bottles of '20 port, at a guinea a bottle; but that kind of price does not suit me. I only happen to have thirty-four-and-sixpence in my pocket, of which I want a shilling for the waiter and eighteenpence for my cab. You rich foreigners and *swells* may spend what you like" (I had him there: for my friend's dress was as shabby as an old-clothes-man's); "but a man with a family, Mr. What-d'-you-call-'im, cannot afford to spend seven or eight hundred a year on his dinner alone."

"Bah!" he said. "Nunkey pays for all, as you say. I will what you call stant the dinner, if you are *so poor!*" and again he gave that disagreeable grin, and placed an odious crooked-nailed and by no means clean finger to his nose. But I was not so afraid of him now, for we were in a public place: and the three glasses of port-wine had, you see, given me courage.

"What a pretty snuff-box!" he remarked, as I handed him mine, which I am still old-fashioned enough to carry. It is a pretty old gold box enough, but valuable to me especially as a relic of an old old relative, whom I can just remember as a child, when she was very kind to me. "Yes; a pretty box. I can remember when many ladies—most ladies—carried a box,—nay, two boxes—*tabatière* and *bonbonnière*. What lady carries snuff-box now, hey? Suppose your astonishment if a lady in an assembly were to offer you a *prise?* I can remember a lady with such a box as this, with a *tour*, as we used to call it then; with *paniers*, with a tortoiseshell cane, with the prettiest little high-heeled velvet shoes in the world!—ah! that was a time, that was a time! Ah, Eliza, Eliza, I have thee now in my mind's eye! At Bungay on the Waveney, did I not walk with thee Eliza? Aha, did I not love thee? Did I not walk with thee then? Do I not see thee still?"

This was passing strange. My ancestress—but there is no need to publish her revered name—did indeed live at Bungay Saint Mary's, where she lies buried. She used to walk with a tortoise-shell cane. She used to wear little black velvet shoes, with the prettiest high heels in the world.

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"Did you—did you—know, then, my great-gr–ndm–ther?" I said.

He pulled up his coat sleeve—"Is that her name?" he said.

"Eliza ———"

There, I declare, was the very name of the kind old creature written in red on his arm.

"*You* knew her old," he said, divining my thoughts (with his strange knack); "*I* knew her young and lovely. I danced with her at the Bury ball. Did I not, dear dear Miss ———?"

As I live, he here mentioned dear gr–nny's *maiden* name. Her maiden name was ——— Her honoured married name was ———

"She married your great-gr–ndf–th–r the year Poseidon won the Newmarket Plate," Mr. Pinto drily remarked.

Merciful powers! I remember, over the old shagreen knife and spoon case on the sideboard in my gr–nny's parlour, a print by Stubbs of that very horse. My grandsire, in a red coat and his fair hair flowing over his shoulders, was over the mantelpiece, and Poseidon won the Newmarket Cup in the year 1783!

"Yes; you are right. I danced a minuet with her at Bury that very night, before I lost my poor leg. And I quarrelled with your grandf——, ha!"

As he said "Ha!" there came three quiet little taps on the table—it is the middle table in the "Gray's-inn Coffee-house," under the bust of the late Duke of W–ll–ngt–n.

"I fired in the air," he continued; "did I not?" (Tap, tap, tap.) "Your grandfather hit me in the leg. He married three months afterwards. 'Captain Brown,' I said, 'who could see Miss Sm–th without loving her?' She is there! She is there!" (Tap, tap, tap.) "Yes, my first love——"

But here there came tap, tap, which everybody knows means "No."

"I forgot," he said, with a faint blush stealing over his wan features, "she was not my first love. In Germ—— in my own country—there *was* a young woman——"

Tap, tap, tap. There was here quite a lively little treble knock; and when the old man said, "But I loved thee better than all the world, Eliza," the affirmative signal was briskly repeated.

And this I declare UPON MY HONOUR. There was, I have said, a bottle of port-wine before us—I should say a decanter. That decanter was LIFTED UP, and out of it into our respective glasses two bumpers of wine were poured. I appeal to Mr. Hart, the landlord—I appeal to James, the respectful and intelligent waiter,

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if this statement is not true? And when we had finished that magnum, and I said—for I did not now in the least doubt of her presence—"Dear gr–nny, may we have another magnum?"—the table *distinctly* rapped "No."

"Now, my good sir," Mr. Pinto said, who really began to be affected by the wine, "you understand the interest I have taken in you. I loved Eliza——" (of course I don't mention family names). "I knew you had that box which belonged to her—I will give you what you like for that box. Name your price at once, and I pay you on the spot."

"Why, when we came out, you said you had not sixpence in your pocket."

"Bah! give you anything you like—fifty—a hundred—a tausend pound."

"Come, come," said I, "the gold of the box may be worth nine guineas, and the *façon*, we will put at six more."

"One tausend guineas!" he screeched. "One tausend and fifty pound, dere!" and he sank back in his chair—no, by the way, on his bench, for he was sitting with his back to one of the partitions of the boxes, as I daresay James remembers.

"*Don't* go on in this way," I continued, rather weakly, for I did not know whether I was in a dream. "If you offer me a thousand guineas for this box I *must* take it. Mustn't I, dear gr–nny?"

The table most distinctly said, "Yes;" and putting out his claws to seize the box, Mr. Pinto plunged his hooked nose into it and eagerly inhaled some of my '47 with a dash of Hardman.

"But stay, you old harpy!" I exclaimed, being now in a sort of rage, and quite familiar with him. "Where is the money? Where is the cheque?"

"James, a piece of note-paper and a receipt-stamp!"

"This is all mighty well, sir," I said, "but I don't know you; I never saw you before. I will trouble you to hand me that box back again, or give me a cheque with some known signature."

"Whose? Ha, HA, HA!"

The room happened to be very dark. Indeed, all the waiters were gone to supper, and there were only two gentlemen snoring in their respective boxes. I saw a hand come quivering down from the ceiling—a very pretty hand, on which was a ring with a coronet, with a lion rampant gules for a crest. *I saw that hand take a dip of ink and write across the paper.* Mr. Pinto, then taking a grey receipt-stamp out of his blue leather pocket-book, fastened it on to the paper by the usual process; and the hand then wrote across the receipt-stamp, went across the table and shook hands with

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Pinto, and then, as if waving him an adieu, vanished in the direction of the ceiling.

There was the paper before me, wet with the ink. There was the pen which THE HAND had used. Does anybody doubt me? *I have that pen now.* A cedar-stick of a not uncommon sort, and holding one of Gillott's pens. It is in my inkstand now, I tell you. Anybody may see it. The handwriting on the cheque, for such the document was, was the writing of a female. It ran thus:—"London, midnight, March 31, 1862. Pay the bearer one thousand and fifty pounds. Rachel Sidonia. To Messrs. Sidonia, Pozzosanto & Co., London."

"Noblest and best of women!" said Pinto, kissing the sheet of paper with much reverence. "My good Mr. Roundabout, I suppose you do not question *that* signature?"

Indeed, the house of Sidonia, Pozzosanto & Co. is known to be one of the richest in Europe, and as for the Countess Rachel, she was known to be the chief manager of that enormously wealthy establishment. There was only one little difficulty, *the Countess Rachel died last October.*

I pointed out this circumstance, and tossed over the paper to Pinto with a sneer.

"C'est à brendre ou à laisser," he said with some heat. "You literary men are all imbrudent; but I did not tink you such a fool *wie* dis. Your box is not worth twenty pound, and I offer you a tausend because I know you want money to pay dat rascal Tom's college bills." (This strange man actually knew that my scapegrace Tom has been a source of great expense and annoyance to me.) "You see money costs me nothing, and you refuse to take it! Once, twice; will you take this cheque in exchange for your trumpery snuff-box?"

What could I do? My poor granny's legacy was valuable and dear to me, but after all a thousand guineas are not to be had every day. "Be it a bargain," said I. "Shall we have a glass of wine on it?" says Pinto; and to this proposal I also unwillingly acceded, reminding him, by the way, that he had not yet told me the story of the headless man.

"Your poor gr–ndm–ther was right just now, when she said she was not my first love. 'Twas one of those *banale* expressions" (here Mr. P. blushed once more) "which we use to women. We tell each she is our first passion. They reply with a similar illusory formula. No man is any woman's first love; no woman any man's. We are in love in our nurse's arms, and women coquette with their eyes before their tongue can form a word. How could your lovely

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relative love me? I was far, far too old for her. I am older than I look. I am so old that you would not believe my age were I to tell you. I have loved many and many a woman before your relative. It has not always been fortunate for them to love me. Ah, Sophronia! Round the dreadful circus where you fell, and whence I was dragged corpselike by the heels, there sat multitudes more savage than the lions which mangled your sweet form! Ah, tenez! when we marched to the terrible stake together at Valladolid —the Protestant and the J—— But away with memory! Boy! it was happy for thy grandam that she loved me not.

"During that strange period," he went on, "when the teeming Time was great with the revolution that was speedily to be born, I was on a mission in Paris with my excellent, my maligned friend, Cagliostro. Mesmer was one of our band. I seemed to occupy but an obscure rank in it; though, as you know, in secret societies the humble man may be a chief and director—the ostensible leader but a puppet moved by unseen hands. Never mind who was chief, or who was second. Never mind my age. It boots not to tell it: why should I expose myself to your scornful incredulity or reply to your questions in words that are familiar to you, but which yet you cannot understand? Words are symbols of things which you know, or of things which you don't know. If you don't know them, to speak is idle." (Here I confess Mr. P. spoke for exactly thirty-eight minutes, about physics, metaphysics, language, the origin and destiny of man, during which time I was rather bored, and, to relieve my *ennui*, drank a half glass or so of wine.) "Love, friend, is the fountain of youth! It may not happen to me once—once in an age: but when I love, then I am young. I loved when I was in Paris. Bathilde, Bathilde, I loved thee—ah, how fondly! Wine, I say, more wine! Love is ever young. I was a boy at the little feet of Bathilde de Béchamel—the fair, the fond, the fickle, ah, the false!" The strange old man's agony was here really terrific, and he showed himself much more agitated than he had been when speaking about my gr–ndm–th–r.

"I thought Blanche might love me. I could speak to her in the language of all countries, and tell her the lore of all ages. I could trace the nursery legends which she loved up to their Sanscrit source, and whisper to her the darkling mysteries of Egyptian Magi. I could chant for her the wild chorus that rang in the dishevelled Eleusinian revel: I could tell her, an I would, the watchword never known but to one woman, the Saban Queen, which Hiram breathed in the abysmal ear of Solomon—You don't attend. Psha! you have drunk too much wine!" Perhaps I may as well own that I was *not* attending, for he had been carrying on for

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about fifty-seven minutes; and I don't like a man to have *all* the talk to himself.

"Blanche de Béchamel was wild, then, about this secret of Masonry. In early early days I loved, I married a girl fair as Blanche, who, too, was tormented by curiosity, who, too, would peep into my closet—into the only secret I guarded from her. A dreadful fate befell poor Fatima. An *accident* shortened her life. Poor thing! she had a foolish sister who urged her on. I always told her to beware of Ann. She died. They said her brothers killed me. A gross falsehood. *Am* I dead? If I were, could I pledge you in this wine?"

"Was your name," I asked, quite bewildered, "was your name, pray, then, ever Blueb——?"

"Hush! the waiter will overhear you. Methought we were speaking of Blanche de Béchamel. I loved her, young man. My pearls, and diamonds, and treasure, my wit, my wisdom, my passion, I flung them all into the child's lap. I was a fool! Was strong Sampson not as weak as I? Was Solomon the Wise much better when Balkis wheedled him? I said to the King—— But enough of that, I spake of Blanche de Béchamel.

"Curiosity was the poor child's foible. I could see, as I talked to her, that her thoughts were elsewhere (as yours, my friend, have been absent once or twice to-night). To know the secret of Masonry was the wretched child's mad desire. With a thousand wiles, smiles, caresses, she strove to coax it from me—from *me*—ha! ha!

"I had an apprentice—the son of a dear friend, who died by my side at Rossbach, when Soubise, with whose army I happened to be, suffered a dreadful defeat for neglecting my advice. The young Chevalier Goby de Mouchy was glad enough to serve as my clerk, and help in some chemical experiments in which I was engaged with my friend Doctor Mesmer. Bathilde saw this young man. Since women were, has it not been their business to smile and deceive, to fondle and lure? Away! from the very first it has been so!" And as my companion spoke, he looked as wicked as the serpent that coiled round the tree, and hissed a poisoned counsel to the first woman.

"One evening I went, as was my wont, to see Blanche. She was radiant: she was wild with spirits: a saucy triumph blazed in her blue eyes. She talked, she rattled on in her childish way. She uttered, in the course of her rhapsody, a hint—an intimation—so terrible that the truth flashed across me in a moment. Did I ask her? She would lie to me. But I know how to make falsehood impossible. And I *ordered her to go to sleep.*"

At this moment the clock (after its previous convulsions)

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sounded TWELVE. And as the new Editor* of the *Cornhill Magazine*—and *he*, I promise you, won't stand any nonsense—will only allow seven pages, I am obliged to leave off at THE VERY MOST INTERESTING POINT OF THE STORY.

PART III.

ARE you of our fraternity? I see you are not. The secret which Mademoiselle de Béchamel confided to me in her mad triumph and wild hoyden spirits—she was but a child, poor thing, poor thing, scarce fifteen:—but I love them young—a folly not unusual with the old!" (Here Mr. Pinto thrust his knuckles into his hollow eyes; and, I am sorry to say, so little regardful was he of personal cleanliness, that his tears made streaks of white over his gnarled dark hands.) "Ah, at fifteen, poor child, thy fate was terrible! Go to! It is not good to love me, friend. They prosper not who do. I divine you. You need not say what you are thinking——"

In truth, I was thinking, if girls fall in love with this sallow, hook-nosed, glass-eyed, wooden-legged, dirty, hideous old man, with the sham teeth, they have a queer taste. *That* is what I was thinking.

"Jack Wilkes said the handsomest man in London had but half-an-hour's start of him. And without vanity, I am scarcely uglier than Jack Wilkes. We were members of the same club at Medmenham Abbey, Jack and I, and had many a merry night together. Well, sir, I—Mary of Scotland knew me but as a little hunchbacked music-master; and yet, and yet, I think *she* was not indifferent to her David Riz—— and *she* came to misfortune. They all do—they all do!"

"Sir, you are wandering from your point!" I said, with some severity. For, really, for this old humbug to hint that he had been the baboon who frightened the club at Medmenham, that he had been in the Inquisition at Valladolid—that under the name of D. Riz, as he called it, he had known the lovely Queen of Scots—was a *little* too much. "Sir," then I said, "you were speaking about a Miss de Béchamel. I really have not time to hear all your biography."

"Faith, the good wine gets into my head." (I should think so,

* Mr. Thackeray retired from the Editorship of the *Cornhill Magazine* in March 1862.

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the old toper! Four bottles all but two glasses.) "To return to poor Blanche. As I sat laughing, joking with her, she let slip a word, a little word, which filled me with dismay. Some one had told her a part of the Secret—the secret which has been divulged scarce thrice in three thousand years—the Secret of the Freemasons. Do you know what happens to those uninitiate who learn that secret? to those wretched men, the initiate who reveal it?"

As Pinto spoke to me, he looked through and through me with his horrible piercing glance, so that I sat quite uneasily on my bench. He continued: "Did I question her awake, I knew she would lie to me. Poor child! I loved her no less because I did not believe a word she said. I loved her blue eye, her golden hair, her delicious voice, that was true in song, though when she spoke, false as Eblis! You are aware that I possess in rather a remarkable degree what we have agreed to call the mesmeric power. I set the unhappy girl to sleep. *Then* she was obliged to tell me all. It was as I had surmised. Goby de Mouchy, my wretched, besotted, miserable secretary, in his visits to the château of the old Marquis de Béchamel, who was one of our society, had seen Blanche. I suppose it was because she had been warned that he was worthless, and poor, artful, and a coward, she loved him. She wormed out of the besotted wretch the secrets of our Order. 'Did he tell you the NUMBER ONE?' I asked.

"She said, 'Yes.'"

"'Did he,' I further inquired, 'tell you the——'

"'Oh, don't ask me, don't ask me!' she said, writhing on the sofa, where she lay in the presence of the Marquis de Béchamel, her most unhappy father. Poor Béchamel, poor Béchamel! How pale he looked as I spoke! 'Did he tell you,' I repeated with a dreadful calm, 'the NUMBER TWO?' She said, 'Yes.'

"The poor old Marquis rose up, and clasping his hands, fell on his knees before Count Cagl—— Bah! I went by a different name then. Vat's in a name? Dat vich ve call a Rosicrucian by any other name vil smell as sveet. 'Monsieur,' he said, 'I am old—I am rich. I have five hundred thousand livres of rentes in Picardy. I have half as much in Artois. I have two hundred and eighty thousand on the Grand Livre. I am promised by my Sovereign a dukedom and his orders with a reversion to my heir. I am a grandee of Spain of the First Class, and Duke of Volovento. Take my titles, my ready money, my life, my honour, everything I have in the world, but don't ask the THIRD QUESTION.'

"'Godefroid de Bouillon, Comte de Béchamel, Grandee of Spain and Prince of Volovento, in our Assembly what was the oath

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you swore?' The old man writhed as he remembered its terrific purport.

"Though my heart was racked with agony, and I would have died, ay, cheerfully" (died, indeed, as if *that* were a penalty!), "to spare yonder lovely child a pang, I said to her calmly, 'Blanche de Béchamel, did Goby de Mouchy tell you secret NUMBER THREE?'

"She whispered a *oui* that was quite faint, faint and small. But her poor father fell in convulsions at her feet.

"She died suddenly that night. Did I not tell you those I love come to no good? When General Bonaparte crossed the Saint Bernard, he saw in the convent an old monk with a white beard, wandering about the corridors, cheerful and rather stout, but mad —mad as a March hare. 'General,' I said to him, 'did you ever see that face before?' He had not. He had not mingled much with the higher classes of our society before the Revolution. *I* knew the poor old man well enough; he was the last of a noble race, and I loved his child."

"And did she die by——?"

"Man! did I say so? Do I whisper the secrets of the Vehmgericht? I say she died that night: and he—he, the heartless, the villain, the betrayer—you saw him seated in yonder curiosity-shop, by yonder guillotine, with his scoundrelly head in his lap.

"You saw how slight that instrument was? It was one of the first which Guillotin made, and which he showed to private friends in a *hangar* in the Rue Picpus, where he lived. The invention created some little conversation amongst scientific men at the time, though I remember a machine in Edinburgh of a very similar construction, two hundred—well, many many years ago—and at a breakfast which Guillotin gave he showed us the instrument, and much talk arose amongst us as to whether people suffered under it.

"And now I must tell you what befell the traitor who had caused all this suffering. Did he know that the poor child's death was a SENTENCE? He felt a cowardly satisfaction that with her was gone the secret of his treason. Then he began to doubt. I had MEANS to penetrate all his thoughts, as well as to know his acts. Then he became a slave to a horrible fear. He fled in abject terror to a convent. They still existed in Paris; and behind the walls of Jacobins the wretch thought himself secure. Poor fool! I had but to set one of my somnambulists to sleep. Her spirit went forth and spied the shuddering wretch in his cell. She described the street, the gate, the convent, the very dress which he wore, and which you saw to-day.

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"And now *this* is what happened. In his chamber in the Rue Saint Honoré, at Paris, sat a man *alone*—a man who has been maligned, a man who has been called a knave and charlatan, a man who has been persecuted even to the death, it is said, in Roman Inquisitions, forsooth, and elsewhere. Ha! ha! A man who has a mighty will.

"And looking towards the Jacobins Convent (of which, from his chamber, he could see the spires and trees), this man WILLED. And it was not yet dawn. And he willed; and one who was lying in his cell in the convent of Jacobins, awake and shuddering with terror for a crime which he had committed, fell asleep.

"But though he was asleep his eyes were open.

"And after tossing and writhing, and clinging to the pallet, and saying, 'No, I will not go,' he rose up and donned his clothes—a grey coat, a vest of white piqué, black satin smallclothes, ribbed silk stockings, and a white stock with a steel buckle; and he arranged his hair, and he tied his queue, all the while being in that strange somnolence which walks, which moves, which FLIES sometimes, which sees, which is indifferent to pain, which OBEYS. And he put on his hat, and he went forth from his cell; and though the dawn was not yet, he trod the corridors as seeing them. And he passed into the cloister, and then into the garden where lie the ancient dead. And he came to the wicket, which Brother Jerome was opening just at the dawning. And the crowd was already waiting with their cans and bowls to receive the alms of the good brethren.

"And he passed through the crowd and went on his way, and the few people then abroad who marked him, said, 'Tiens! How very odd he looks! He looks like a man walking in his sleep!' This was said by various persons:—

"By milk-women, with their cans and carts, coming into the town.

"By roysterers who had been drinking at the taverns of the Barrier, for it was Mid-Lent.

"By the sergeants of the watch, who eyed him sternly as he passed near their halberds.

"But he passed on unmoved by the halberds,

"Unmoved by the cries of the roysterers,

"By the market-women coming with their milk and eggs.

"He walked through the Rue Saint Honoré, I say:—

"By the Rue Rambuteau,

"By the Rue Saint Antoine,

"By the King's Château of the Bastille,

"By the Faubourg Saint Antoine.

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"And he came to No. 29 in the Rue Picpus—a house which then stood between a court and garden——

"That is, there was a building of one story, with a great coach-door.

"Then there was a court, around which were stables, coach-houses, offices.

"Then there was a house—a two-storied house, with a *perron* in front.

"Behind the house was a garden—a garden of two hundred and fifty French feet in length.

"And as one hundred feet of France equal one hundred and six feet of England, this garden, my friends, equalled exactly two hundred and sixty-five feet of British measure.

"In the centre of the garden was a fountain and a statue—or, to speak more correctly, two statues. One was recumbent,—a man. Over him, sabre in hand, stood a woman.

"The man was Olofernes. The woman was Judith. From the head, from the trunk, the water gushed. It was the taste of the doctor;—was it not a droll of taste?

"At the end of the garden was the doctor's cabinet of study. My faith, a singular cabinet, and singular pictures!—

"Decapitation of Charles Premier at Vitehall.

"Decapitation of Montrose at Edimbourg.

"Decapitation of Cinq Mars. When I tell you that he was a man of a taste, charming!

"Through this garden, by these statues, up these stairs, went the pale figure of him who, the porter said, knew the way of the house. He did. Turning neither right nor left, he seemed to walk *through* the statues, the obstacles, the flower-beds, the stairs, the door, the tables, the chairs.

"In the corner of the room was THAT INSTRUMENT which Guillotin had just invented and perfected. One day he was to lay his own head under his own axe. Peace be to his name! With him I deal not!

"In a frame of mahogany, neatly worked, was a board with a half-circle in it, over which another board fitted. Above was a heavy axe, which fell—you know how. It was held up by a rope, and when this rope was untied, or cut, the steel fell.

"To the story which I now have to relate you may give credence, or not, as you will. The sleeping man went up to that instrument.

"He laid his head in it, asleep."

"Asleep!"

"He then took a little penknife out of the pocket of his white dimity waistcoat.

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"He cut the rope asleep.

"The axe descended on the head of the traitor and villain. The notch in it was made by the steel buckle of his stock, which was cut through.

"A strange legend has got abroad that after the deed was done, the figure rose, took the head from the basket, walked forth through the garden, and by the screaming porters at the gate, and went and laid itself down at the Morgue. But for this I will not vouch. Only of this be sure. 'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamed of in your philosophy.' More and more the light peeps through the chinks. Soon, amidst music ravishing, the curtain will rise, and the glorious scene be displayed. Adieu! Remember me. Ha! 'tis dawn," Pinto said. And he was gone.

I am ashamed to say that my first movement was to clutch the cheque which he had left with me, and which I was determined to present the very moment the bank opened. I know the importance of these things, and that men *change their mind* sometimes. I sprang through the streets to the great banking house of Manasseh in Duke Street. It seemed to me as if I actually flew as I walked. As the clock struck ten I was at the counter and laid down my cheque.

The gentleman who received it, who was one of the Hebrew persuasion, as were the other two hundred clerks of the establishment, having looked at the draft with terror in his countenance, then looked at me, then called to himself two of his fellow-clerks, and queer it was to see all their aquiline beaks over the paper.

"Come, come!" said I, "don't keep me here all day. Hand me over the money, short, if you please!" for I was, you see, a little alarmed, and so determined to assume some extra bluster.

"Will you have the kindness to step into the parlour to the partners?" the clerk said, and I followed him.

"What, *again?*" shrieked a bald-headed, red-whiskered gentleman, whom I knew to be Mr. Manasseh. "Mr. Salathiel, this is too bad. Leave me with this gentleman, S." And the clerk disappeared.

"Sir," he said, "I know how you came by this; the Count de Pinto gave it you. It is too bad! I honour my parents; I honour *their* parents; I honour their bills! But this one of grandma's is too bad—it is, upon my word, now! She've been dead these five-and-thirty years. And this last four months she has left her burial-place and took to drawing on our 'ouse! It's too bad, grandma; it is too bad!" and he appealed to me, and tears actually trickled down his nose.

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"Is it the Countess Sidonia's cheque or not?" I asked haughtily.

"But, I tell you, she's dead! It's a shame!—it's a shame!—it is, grandmamma!" and he cried, and wiped his great nose in his yellow pocket-handkerchief. "Look year—will you take pounds instead of guineas? She's dead, I tell you! It's no go! Take the pounds—one tausend pound!—ten nice, neat, crisp hundred-pound notes, and go away vid you, do!"

"I will have my bond, sir, or nothing," I said; and I put on an attitude of resolution which I confess surprised even myself.

"Wery vell," he shrieked, with many oaths, "then you shall have noting—ha, ha, ha!—noting but a policeman! Mr. Abednego, call a policeman! Take that, you humbug and impostor!" and here, with an abundance of frightful language which I dare not repeat, the wealthy banker abused and defied me.

Au bout du compte, what was I to do, if a banker did not choose to honour a cheque drawn by his dead grandmother? I began to wish I had my snuff-box back. I began to think I was a fool for changing that little old-fashioned gold for this slip of strange paper.

Meanwhile the banker had passed from his fit of anger to a paroxysm of despair. He seemed to be addressing some person invisible, but in the room: "Look here, ma'am, you've really been coming it too strong. A hundred thousand in six months, and now a thousand more! The 'ouse can't stand it; it *won't* stand it, I say! What? Oh! mercy, mercy!"

As he uttered these words, A HAND fluttered over the table in the air! It was a female hand: that which I had seen the night before. That female hand took a pen from the green-baize table, dipped it in a silver inkstand, and wrote on a quarter of a sheet of foolscap on the blotting-book, "How about the diamond robbery? If you do not pay, I will tell him where they are."

What diamonds? what robbery? what was this mystery? That will never be ascertained, for the wretched man's demeanour instantly changed. "Certainly, sir;—oh, certainly," he said, forcing a grin. "How will you have the money, sir? All right, Mr. Abednego. This way out."

"I hope I shall often see you again," I said; on which I own poor Manasseh gave a dreadful grin, and shot back into his parlour.

I ran home, clutching the ten delicious, crisp hundred pounds, and the dear little fifty which made up the account. I flew through the streets again. I got to my chambers. I bolted the outer doors. I sank back in my great chair and slept. . . .

My first thing on waking was to feel for my money. Perdition!

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Where was I? Ha!—on the table before me was my grandmother's snuff-box, and by its side one of those awful—those admirable—sensation novels, which I had been reading, and which are full of delicious wonder.

But that the guillotine is still to be seen at Mr. Gale's, No. 47 High Holborn, I give you MY HONOUR. I suppose I was dreaming about it. I don't know. What is dreaming? What is life? Why shouldn't I sleep on the ceiling?—and am I sitting on it now, or on the floor? I am puzzled. But enough. If the fashion for sensation novels goes on, I tell you I will write one in fifty volumes. For the present, DIXI. But between ourselves, this Pinto, who fought at the Colosseum, who was nearly being roasted by the Inquisition, and sang duets at Holyrood, I am rather sorry to lose him after three little bits of Roundabout Papers. *Et vous?*

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DE FINIBUS

WHEN Swift was in love with Stella, and despatching her a letter from London thrice a month, by the Irish packet, you may remember how he would begin letter No. XXIII., we will say, on the very day when XXII. had been sent away, stealing out of the coffee-house or the assembly so as to be able to prattle with his dear; "never letting go her kind hand, as it were," as some commentator or other has said in speaking of the Dean and his amour. When Mr. Johnson, walking to Dodsley's, and touching the posts in Pall Mall as he walked, forgot to pat the head of one of them, he went back and imposed his hands on it,—impelled I know not by what superstition. I have this I hope not dangerous mania too. As soon as a piece of work is out of hand, and before going to sleep, I like to begin another; it may be to write only half-a-dozen lines: but that is something towards Number the Next. The printer's boy has not yet reached Green Arbour Court with the copy. Those people who were alive half-an-hour since, Pendennis, Clive Newcome, and (what do you call him? what was the name of the last hero? I remember now!) Philip Firmin, have hardly drunk their glass of wine, and the mammas have only this minute got the children's cloaks on, and have been bowed out of my premises—and here I come back to the study again: *tamen usque recurro*. How lonely it looks now all these people are gone! My dear good friends, some folk are utterly tired of you, and say, "What a poverty of friends the man has! He is always asking us to meet those Pendennises, Newcomes, and so forth. Why does he not introduce us to some new characters? Why is he not thrilling like Twostars, learned and profound like Threestars, exquisitely humorous and human like Fourstars? Why, finally, is he not somebody else?" My good people, it is not only impossible to please you all, but it is absurd to try. The dish which one man devours, another dislikes. Is the dinner of to-day not to your taste? Let us hope to-morrow's entertainment will be more agreeable. * * * I resume my original subject. What an odd, pleasant, humorous, melancholy feeling it is to sit in the study alone and quiet, now all

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these people are gone who have been boarding and lodging with me for twenty months! They have interrupted my rest: they have plagued me at all sorts of minutes: they have thrust themselves upon me when I was ill, or wished to be idle, and I have growled out a "Be hanged to you, can't you leave me alone now?" Once or twice they have prevented my going out to dinner. Many and many a time they have prevented my coming home, because I knew they were there waiting in the study, and a plague take them, and I have left home and family, and gone to dine at the Club, and told nobody where I went. They have bored me, those people. They have plagued me at all sorts of uncomfortable hours. They have made such a disturbance in my mind and house, that sometimes I have hardly known what was going on in my family and scarcely have heard what my neighbour said to me. They are gone at last, and you would expect me to be at ease? Far from it. I should almost be glad if Woolcomb would walk in and talk to me; or Twysden reappear, take his place in that chair opposite me, and begin one of his tremendous stories.

Madmen, you know, see visions, hold conversations with, even draw the likeness of, people invisible to you and me. Is this making of people out of fancy madness? and are novel-writers at all entitled to strait-waistcoats? I often forget people's names in life; and in my own stories contritely own that I make dreadful blunders regarding them; but I declare, my dear sir, with respect to the personages introduced into your humble servant's fables, I know the people utterly—I know the sound of their voices. A gentleman came in to see me the other day, who was so like the picture of Philip Firmin in Mr. Walker's charming drawings in the *Cornhill Magazine* that he was quite a curiosity to me. The same eyes, beard, shoulders, just as you have seen them from month to month. Well, he is not like the Philip Firmin in my mind. Asleep, asleep in the grave, lies the bold, the generous, the reckless, the tender-hearted creature whom I have made to pass through those adventures which have just been brought to an end. It is years since I heard the laughter ringing, or saw the bright blue eyes. When I knew him both were young. I become young as I think of him. And this morning he was alive again in this room, ready to laugh, to fight, to weep. As I write, do you know, it is the grey of evening; the house is quiet; everybody is out; the room is getting a little dark, and I look rather wistfully up from the paper with perhaps ever so little fancy that HE MAY COME IN.———No? No movement. No grey shade, growing more palpable, out of which at last look the well-known eyes. No, the printer came and took him away with the last page of the proofs.

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And with the printer's boy did the whole cortège of ghosts flit away, invisible! Ha! stay! what is this? Angels and ministers of grace! The door opens, and a dark form—enters, bearing a black —a black suit of clothes. It is John. He says it is time to dress for dinner.

. . . . . .

Every man who has had his German tutor, and has been coached through the famous "Faust" of Goethe (thou wert my instructor, good old Weissenborn, and these eyes beheld the great master himself in dear little Weimar town!) has read those charming verses which are prefixed to the drama, in which the poet reverts to the time when his work was first composed, and recalls the friends now departed, who once listened to his song. The dear shadows rise up around him, he says; he lives in the past again. It is to-day which appears vague and visionary. We humbler writers cannot create Fausts, or raise up monumental works that shall endure for all ages; but our books are diaries, in which our own feelings must of necessity be set down. As we look to the page written last month, or ten years ago, we remember the day and its events; the child ill, mayhap, in the adjoining room, and the doubts and fears which racked the brain as it still pursued its work; the dear old friend who read the commencement of the tale, and whose gentle hand shall be laid in ours no more. I own for my part that, in reading pages which this hand penned formerly, I often lose sight of the text under my eyes. It is not the words I see; but that past day; that bygone page of life's history; that tragedy, comedy it may be, which our little home company was enacting; that merrymaking which we shared; that funeral which we followed; that bitter bitter grief which we buried.

And, such being the state of my mind, I pray gentle readers to deal kindly with their humble servant's manifold shortcomings, blunders, and slips of memory. As sure as I read a page of my own composition, I find a fault or two, half-a-dozen. Jones is called Brown. Brown, who is dead, is brought to life. Aghast, and months after the number was printed, I saw that I had called Philip Firmin, Clive Newcome. Now Clive Newcome is the hero of another story by the reader's most obedient writer. The two men are as different, in my mind's eye, as—as Lord Palmerston and Mr. Disraeli let us say. But there is that blunder at page 990, line 76, volume 84 of the *Cornhill Magazine*, and it is past mending; and I wish in my life I had made no worse blunders or errors than that which is hereby acknowledged.

Another Finis written. Another mile-stone passed on this

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journey from birth to the next world! Sure it is a subject for solemn cogitation. Shall we continue this story-telling business and be voluble to the end of our age? Will it not be presently time, O prattler, to hold your tongue, and let younger people speak? I have a friend, a painter, who, like other persons who shall be nameless, is growing old. He has never painted with such laborious finish as his works now show. This master is still the most humble and diligent of scholars. Of Art, his mistress, he is always an eager reverent pupil. In his calling, in yours, in mine, industry and humility will help and comfort us. A word with you. In a pretty large experience I have not found the men who write books superior in wit or learning to those who don't write at all. In regard of mere information, non-writers must often be superior to writers. You don't expect a lawyer in full practice to be conversant with all kinds of literature; he is too busy with his law; and so a writer is commonly too busy with his own books to be able to bestow attention on the works of other people. After a day's work (in which I have been depicting, let us say, the agonies of Louisa on parting with the Captain, or the atrocious behaviour of the wicked Marquis to Lady Emily) I march to the Club, proposing to improve my mind and keep myself "posted up," as the Americans phrase it, in the literature of the day. And what happens? Given, a walk after luncheon, a pleasing book, and a most comfortable arm-chair by the fire, and you know the rest. A doze ensues. Pleasing book drops suddenly, is picked up once with an air of some confusion, is laid presently softly in lap: head falls on comfortable arm-chair cushion: eyes close: soft nasal music is heard. Am I telling Club secrets? Of afternoons, after lunch, I say, scores of sensible fogies have a doze. Perhaps I have fallen asleep over that very book to which "Finis" has just been written. "And if the writer sleeps, what happens to the readers?" says Jones, coming down upon me with his lightning wit. What? You *did* sleep over it? And a very good thing too. These eyes have more than once seen a friend dozing over pages which this hand has written. There is a vignette somewhere in one of my books of a friend so caught napping with "Pendennis," or the "Newcomes," in his lap; and if a writer can give you a sweet, soothing, harmless sleep, has he not done you a kindness? So is the author who excites and interests you worthy of your thanks and benedictions. I am troubled with fever and ague, that seize me at odd intervals and prostrate me for a day. There is cold fit, for which, I am thankful to say, hot brandy-and-water is prescribed; and this induces hot fit, and so on. In one or two of these fits I have read novels with the most fearful contentment of mind.

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Once, on the Mississippi, it was my dearly beloved "Jacob Faithful": once, at Frankfort O.M., the delightful "Vingt Ans Après" of Monsieur Dumas: once, at Tunbridge Wells, the thrilling "Woman in White": and these books gave me amusement from morning till sunset. I remember those ague fits with a great deal of pleasure and gratitude. Think of a whole day in bed, and a good novel for a companion! No cares: no remorse about idleness: no visitors: and the Woman in White or the Chevalier d'Artagnan to tell me stories from dawn to night! "Please, ma'am, my master's compliments, and can he have the third volume?" (This message was sent to an astonished friend and neighbour who lent me, volume by volume, the "W. in W.") How do you like your novels? I like mine strong, "hot with," and no mistake: no love-making: no observations about society: little dialogue, except where the characters are bullying each other: plenty of fighting: and a villain in the cupboard, who is to suffer tortures just before Finis. I don't like your melancholy Finis. I never read the history of a consumptive heroine twice. If I might give a short hint to an impartial writer (as the *Examiner* used to say in old days), it would be to act, *not* à la mode le pays de Pole (I think that was the phraseology), but *always* to give quarter. In the story of Philip, just come to an end, I have the permission of the author to state that he was going to drown the two villains of the piece—a certain Doctor F—— and a certain Mr. T. H—— on board the *President*, or some other tragic ship—but you see I relented. I pictured to myself Firmin's ghastly face amid the crowd of shuddering people on that reeling deck in the lonely ocean, and thought, "Thou ghastly lying wretch, thou shalt not be drowned; thou shalt have a fever only; a knowledge of thy danger; and a chance —ever so small a chance—of repentance." I wonder whether he *did* repent when he found himself in the yellow-fever, in Virginia? The probability is, he fancied that his son had injured him very much, and forgave him on his death-bed. Do you imagine there is a great deal of genuine right-down remorse in the world? Don't people rather find excuses which make their minds easy; endeavour to prove to themselves that they have been lamentably belied and misunderstood; and try and forgive the persecutors who *will* present that bill when it is due; and not bear malice against the cruel ruffian who takes them to the police-office for stealing the spoons? Years ago I had a quarrel with a certain well-known person (I believed a statement regarding him which his friends imparted to me, and which turned out to be quite incorrect). To his dying day that quarrel was never quite made up. I said to his brother, "Why is your brother's soul still dark against me? It is I who

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ought to be angry and unforgiving: for I was in the wrong." In the region which they now inhabit (for Finis has been set to the volumes of the lives of both here below), if they take any cognisance of our squabbles, and tittle-tattles, and gossips on earth here, I hope they admit that my little error was not of a nature unpardonable. If you have never committed a worse, my good sir, surely the score against you will not be heavy. Ha, *dilectissimi fratres!* It is in regard of sins *not* found out that we may say or sing (in an undertone, in a most penitent and lugubrious minor key), "Miserere nobis miseris peccatoribus."

Among the sins of commission which novel-writers not seldom perpetrate, is the sin of grandiloquence, or tall-talking, against which, for my part, I will offer up a special *libera me*. This is the sin of schoolmasters, governesses, critics, sermoners, and instructors of young or old people. Nay (for I am making a clean breast, and liberating my soul), perhaps of all the novel-spinners now extant, the present speaker is the most addicted to preaching. Does he not stop perpetually in his story and begin to preach to you? When he ought to be engaged with business, is he not for ever taking the Muse by the sleeve, and plaguing her with some of his cynical sermons? I cry *peccavi* loudly and heartily. I tell you I would like to be able to write a story which should show no egotism whatever—in which there should be no reflections, no cynicism, no vulgarity (and so forth), but an incident in every other page, a villain, a battle, a mystery in every chapter. I should like to be able to feed a reader so spicily as to leave him hungering and thirsting for more at the end of every monthly meal.

Alexandre Dumas describes himself, when inventing the plan of a work, as lying silent on his back for two whole days on the deck of a yacht in a Mediterranean port. At the end of the two days he arose and called for dinner. In those two days he had built his plot. He had moulded a mighty clay, to be cast presently in perennial brass. The chapters, the characters, the incidents, the combinations were all arranged in the artist's brain ere he set a pen to paper. My Pegasus won't fly, so as to let me survey the field below me. He has no wings, he is blind of one eye certainly; he is restive, stubborn, slow; crops a hedge when he ought to be galloping, or gallops when he ought to be quiet. He never will show off when I want him. Sometimes he goes at a pace which surprises me. Sometimes, when I most wish him to make the running, the brute turns restive, and I am obliged to let him take his own time. I wonder do other novel-writers experience this fatalism? They *must* go a certain way, in spite of themselves. I have been surprised at the observations made by some of my char-

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acters. It seems as if an occult Power was moving the pen. The personage does or says something, and I ask, how the dickens did he come to think of that? Every man has remarked in dreams, the vast dramatic power which is sometimes evinced; I won't say the surprising power, for nothing does surprise you in dreams. But those strange characters you meet make instant observations of which you never can have thought previously. In like manner, the imagination foretells things. We spake anon of the inflated style of some writers. What also if there is an *afflated* style,—when a writer is like a Pythoness on her oracle tripod, and mighty words, words which he cannot help, come blowing, and bellowing, and whistling, and moaning through the speaking pipes of his bodily organ? I have told you it was a very queer shock to me the other day when, with a letter of introduction in his hand, the artist's (not my) Philip Firmin walked into this room, and sat down in the chair opposite. In the novel of "Pendennis," written ten years ago, there is an account of a certain Costigan, whom I had invented (as I suppose authors invent their personages out of scraps, heel-taps, odds and ends of characters). I was smoking in a tavern parlour one night—and this Costigan came into the room alive—the very man:—the most remarkable resemblance of the printed sketches of the man, of the rude drawings in which I had depicted him. He had the same little coat, the same battered hat, cocked on one eye, the same twinkle in that eye. "Sir," said I, knowing him to be an old friend whom I had met in unknown regions, "sir," I said, "may I offer you a glass of brandy-and-water?" "*Bedad, ye may*," says he, "*and I'll sing ye a song tu.*" Of course he spoke with an Irish brogue. Of course he had been in the army. In ten minutes he pulled out an Army Agent's account, whereon his name was written. A few months after we read of him in a police-court. How had I come to know him, to divine him? Nothing shall convince me that I have not seen that man in the world of spirits. In the world of spirits and water I know I did: but that is a mere quibble of words. I was not surprised when he spoke in an Irish brogue. I had had cognisance of him before somehow. Who has not felt that little shock which arises when a person, a place, some words in a book (there is always a collocation) present themselves to you, and you know that you have before met the same person, words, scene, and so forth?

They used to call the good Sir Walter the "Wizard of the North." What if some writer should appear who can write so *enchantingly* that he shall be able to call into actual life the people whom he invents? What if Mignon, and Margaret, and Goetz von Berlichingen are alive now (though I don't say they are

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visible), and Dugald Dalgetty and Ivanhoe were to step in at that open window by the little garden yonder? Suppose Uncas and our noble old Leather-stocking were to glide silently in? Suppose Athos, Porthos, and Aramis should enter with a noiseless swagger, curling their moustaches? And dearest Amelia Booth, on Uncle Toby's arm; and Tittlebat Titmouse, with his hair dyed green; and all the Crummles company of comedians, with the Gil Blas troop; and Sir Roger de Coverley; and the greatest of all crazy gentlemen, the Knight of La Mancha, with his blessed squire? I say to you, I look rather wistfully towards the window, musing upon these people. Were any of them to enter, I think I should not be very much frightened. Dear old friends, what pleasant hours I have had with them! We do not see each other very often, but when we do, we are ever happy to meet. I had a capital half-hour with Jacob Faithful last night; when the last sheet was corrected, when "Finis" had been written, and the printer's boy, with the copy, was safe in Green Arbour Court.

So you are gone, little printer's boy, with the last scratches and corrections on the proof, and a fine flourish by way of Finis at the story's end. The last corrections? I say those last corrections seem never to be finished. A plague upon the weeds! Every day, when I walk in my own little literary garden-plot, I spy some, and should like to have a spud, and root them out. Those idle words, neighbour, are past remedy. That turning back to the old pages produces anything but elation of mind. Would you not pay a pretty fine to be able to cancel some of them? Oh, the sad old pages, the dull old pages! Oh, the cares, the *ennui*, the squabbles, the repetitions, the old conversations over and over again! But now and again a kind thought is recalled, and now and again a dear memory. Yet a few chapters more, and then the last: after which, behold Finis itself come to an end, and the Infinite begun.

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ON A PEAL OF BELLS

AS some bells in a church hard by are making a great holiday clanging in the summer afternoon, I am reminded somehow of a July day, a garden, and a great clanging of bells years and years ago, on the very day when George IV. was crowned. I remember a little boy lying in that garden reading his first novel. It was called the "Scottish Chiefs." The little boy (who is now ancient and not little) read this book in the summer-house of his great-grandmamma. She was eighty years of age then. A most lovely and picturesque old lady, with a long tortoiseshell cane, with a little puff, or *tour*, of snow-white (or was it powdered?) hair under her cap, with the prettiest little black-velvet slippers and high heels you ever saw. She had a grandson, a lieutenant in the navy; son of her son, a captain in the navy; grandson of her husband, a captain in the navy. She lived for scores and scores of years in a dear little old Hampshire town inhabited by the wives, widows, daughters of navy captains, admirals, lieutenants. Dear me! Don't I remember Mrs. Duval, widow of Admiral Duval; and the Miss Dennets, at the Great House at the other end of the town, Admiral Dennet's daughters; and the Miss Barrys, the late Captain Barry's daughters; and the good old Miss Maskews, Admiral Maskews's daughter; and that dear little Miss Norval, and the kind Miss Bookers, one of whom married Captain, now Admiral, Sir Henry Excellent, K.C.B.? Far far away into the past I look and see the little town with its friendly glimmer. That town was so like a novel of Miss Austen's that I wonder was she born and bred there? No, we should have known, and the good old ladies would have pronounced her to be a little idle thing, occupied with her silly books and neglecting her housekeeping. There were other towns in England, no doubt, where dwelt the widows and wives of other navy captains; where they tattled, loved each other, and quarrelled; talked about Betty the maid, and her fine ribbons indeed! took their dish of tea at six, played at quadrille every night till ten, when there was a little bit of supper, after which Betty came with the lanthorn; and next

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day came, and next, and next, and so forth, until a day arrived when the lanthorn was out, when Betty came no more: all that little company sank to rest under the daisies, whither some folks will presently follow them. How did they live to be so old, those good people? *Moi qui vous parle*, I perfectly recollect old Mr. Gilbert, who had been to sea with Captain Cook; and Captain Cook, as you justly observe, dear Miss, quoting out of your "Mangnall's Questions," was murdered by the natives of Owhyhee, anno 1779. Ah! don't you remember his picture, standing on the seashore, in tights and gaiters, with a musket in his hand, pointing to his people not to fire from the boats, whilst a great tattooed savage is going to stab him in the back? Don't you remember those houris dancing before him and the other officers at the great Otaheite ball? Don't you know that Cook was at the siege of Quebec, with the glorious Wolfe, who fought under the Duke of Cumberland, whose Royal father was a distinguished officer at Ramillies, before he commanded in chief at Dettingen? Huzza! Give it them, my lads! My horse is down! Then I know I shall not run away. Do the French run? then I die content. Stop. Wo! *Quo me rapis?* My Pegasus is galloping off, goodness knows where, like his Majesty's charger at Dettingen.

How do these rich historical and personal reminiscences come out of the subject at present in hand? What *is* that subject, by the way? My dear friend, if you look at the last essaykin (though you may leave it alone, and I shall not be in the least surprised or offended), if you look at the last paper, where the writer imagines Athos and Porthos, Dalgetty and Ivanhoe, Amelia and Sir Charles Grandison, Don Quixote and Sir Roger, walking in at the garden-window, you will at once perceive that NOVELS and their heroes and heroines are our present subject of discourse, into which we will presently plunge. Are you one of us, dear sir, and do you love novel-reading? To be reminded of your first novel will surely be a pleasure to you. Hush! I never read quite to the end of my first, the "Scottish Chiefs." I couldn't. I peeped in an alarmed furtive manner at some of the closing pages. Miss Porter, like a kind dear tender-hearted creature, would not have Wallace's head chopped off at the end of Vol. V. She made him die in prison,* and if I remember right (protesting I have not read the book for forty-two or three years), Robert Bruce made a speech to his

* I find, on reference to the novel, that Sir William died on the scaffold, not in prison. His last words were, "'My prayer is heard. Life's cord is cut by Heaven. Helen! Helen! May Heaven preserve my country, and——' He stopped. He fell. And with that mighty shock the scaffold shook to its foundation."

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soldiers, in which he said, "And Bannockburn shall equal Cambuskenneth." * But I repeat, I could not read the end of the fifth volume of that dear delightful book for crying. Good heavens! It was as sad, as sad as going back to school.

The glorious Scott cycle of romances came to me some four or five years afterwards; and I think boys of our year were specially fortunate in coming upon those delightful books at that special time when we could best enjoy them. Oh, that sunshiny bench on half-holidays, with Claverhouse or Ivanhoe for a companion! I have remarked of very late days some little men in a great state of delectation over the romances of Captain Mayne Reid, and Gustave Aimard's Prairie and Indian Stories, and during occasional holiday visits, lurking off to bed with the volume under their arms. But are those Indians and warriors so terrible as *our* Indians and warriors were? (I say, are they? Young gentlemen, mind, I do not say they are not.) But, as an oldster, I can be heartily thankful for the novels of the 1–10 Geo. IV., let us say, and so downward to a period not unremote. Let us see; there is, first, our dear Scott. Whom do I love in the works of that dear old master? Amo—

The Baron of Bradwardine, and Fergus. (Captain Waverley is certainly very mild.)

Amo Ivanhoe; LOCKSLEY; the Templar.

Amo Quentin Durward, and specially Quentin's uncle, who brought the Boar to bay. I forget the gentleman's name.

I have never cared for the Master of Ravenswood, or fetched his hat out of the water since he dropped it there when I last met him (circa 1825).

Amo SALADIN and the Scotch knight in the "Talisman." The Sultan best.

Amo CLAVERHOUSE.

Amo MAJOR DALGETTY. Delightful Major. To think of him is to desire to jump up, run to the book, and get the volume down

* The remark of Bruce (which I protest I had not read for forty-two years), I find to be as follows:—"When this was uttered by the English heralds, Bruce turned to Ruthven, with an heroic smile, 'Let him come, my brave barons! and he shall find that Bannockburn shall page with Cambuskenneth!'" In the same amiable author's famous novel of "Thaddeus of Warsaw," there is more crying than in any novel I ever remember to have read. See, for example, the last page:—"Incapable of speaking, Thaddeus led his wife back to her carriage. . . . His tears gushed out in spite of himself, and mingling with hers, poured those thanks, those assurances, of animated approbation through her heart, which made it even ache with excess of happiness." And a sentence or two further: "Kosciusko did bless him, and embalmed the benediction with a shower of tears."

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from the shelf. About all those heroes of Scott, what a manly bloom there is, and honourable modesty! They are not at all heroic. They seem to blush somehow in their position of hero, and as it were to say, "Since it must be done, here goes!" They are handsome, modest, upright, simple, courageous, not too clever. If I were a mother (which is absurd), I should like to be mother-in-law to several young men of the Walter-Scott-hero sort.

Much as I like those most unassuming, manly, unpretending gentlemen, I have to own that I think the heroes of another writer, viz.:—

LEATHER-STOCKING,
UNCAS,
HARDHEART,
TOM COFFIN,

are quite the equals of Scott's men; perhaps Leather-stocking is better than any one in "Scott's lot." *La Longue Carabine* is one of the great prize-men of fiction. He ranks with your Uncle Toby, Sir Roger de Coverley, Falstaff—heroic figures, all—American or British, and the artist has deserved well of his country who devised them.

At school, in my time, there was a public day, when the boys' relatives, an examining bigwig or two from the Universities, old schoolfellows, and so forth, came to the place. The boys were all paraded; prizes were administered; each lad being in a new suit of clothes—and magnificent dandies, I promise you, some of us were. Oh, the chubby cheeks, clean collars, glossy new raiment, beaming faces, glorious in youth—fit *tueri cœlum*—bright with truth, and mirth, and honour! To see a hundred boys marshalled in a chapel or old hall! to hear their sweet fresh voices when they chant, and look in their brave calm faces: I say, does not the sight and sound of them smite you, somehow, with a pang of exquisite kindness? . . . Well. As about boys, so about Novelists. I fancy the boys of Parnassus School all paraded. I am a lower boy myself in that academy. I like our fellows to look well, upright, gentlemanlike. There is Master Fielding—he with the black eye. What a magnificent build of a boy! There is Master Scott, one of the heads of the school. Did you ever see a fellow more hearty and manly? Yonder lean, shambling, cadaverous lad, who is always borrowing money, telling lies, leering after the housemaids, is Master Laurence Sterne—a bishop's grandson, and himself intended for the Church: for shame, you little reprobate! But what a genius the fellow has! Let him have a sound flogging, and as soon as the young scamp is out of the whipping-room give him a gold medal. Such would be my practice if I were Doctor Birch, and master of the school.

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Let us drop this school metaphor, this birch and all pertaining thereto. Our subject, I beg leave to remind the reader's humble servant, is novel heroes and heroines. How do you like your heroes, ladies? Gentlemen, what novel heroines do you prefer? When I set this essay going, I sent the above question to two of the most inveterate novel-readers of my acquaintance. The gentleman refers me to Miss Austen; the lady says Athos, Guy Livingstone, and (pardon my rosy blushes) Colonel Esmond, and owns that in youth she was very much in love with Valancourt.

"Valancourt? and who was he?" cry the young people. Valancourt, my dears, was the hero of one of the most famous romances which ever was published in this country. The beauty and elegance of Valancourt made your young grandmammas' gentle hearts to beat with respectful sympathy. He and his glory have passed away. Ah, woe is me, that the glory of novels should ever decay; that dust should gather round them on the shelves; that the annual cheques from Messieurs the publishers should dwindle, dwindle! Inquire at Mudie's, or the London Library, who asks for the "Mysteries of Udolpho" now? Have not even the "Mysteries of Paris" ceased to frighten? Alas, our novels are but for a season; and I know characters whom a painful modesty forbids me to mention, who shall go to limbo along with "Valancourt" and "Doricourt" and "Thaddeus of Warsaw."

A dear old sentimental friend, with whom I discoursed on the subject of novels yesterday, said that her favourite hero was Lord Orville, in "Evelina," that novel which Doctor Johnson loved so. I took down the book from a dusty old crypt at a club, where Mrs. Barbauld's novelists repose: and this is the kind of thing, ladies and gentlemen, in which your ancestors found pleasure:—

"And here, whilst I was looking for the books, I was followed by Lord Orville. He shut the door after he came in, and, approaching me with a look of anxiety, said, 'Is this true, Miss Anville—are you going?'

"'I believe so, my Lord,' said I, still looking for the books.

"'So suddenly, so unexpectedly: must I lose you?'

"'No great loss, my Lord,' said I, endeavouring to speak cheerfully.

"'Is it possible,' said he gravely, 'Miss Anville can doubt my sincerity?'

"'I can't imagine,' cried I, 'what Mrs. Selwyn has done with those books.'

"'Would to Heaven,' continued he, 'I might flatter myself you would allow me to prove it!'

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"'I must run upstairs,' cried I, greatly confused, 'and ask what she has done with them.'

"'You are going then,' cried he, taking my hand, 'and you give me not the smallest hope of any return! Will you not, my too lovely friend, will you not teach me, with fortitude like your own, to support your absence?'

"'My Lord,' cried I, endeavouring to disengage my hand, 'pray let me go!'

"'I will,' cried he to my inexpressible confusion, dropping on one knee, 'if you wish me to leave you.'

"'Oh, my Lord,' exclaimed I, 'rise, I beseech you; rise. Surely your Lordship is not so cruel as to mock me.'

"'Mock you!' repeated he earnestly; 'no, I revere you. I esteem and admire you above all human beings! You are the friend to whom my soul is attached, as to its better half. You are the most amiable, the most perfect of women; and you are dearer to me than language has the power of telling.'

"I attempt not to describe my sensations at that moment; I scarce breathed; I doubted if I existed; the blood forsook my cheeks, and my feet refused to sustain me. Lord Orville hastily rising supported me to a chair upon which I sank almost lifeless.

"I cannot write the scene that followed, though every word is engraven on my heart; but his protestations, his expressions, were too flattering for repetition; nor would he, in spite of my repeated efforts to leave him, suffer me to escape; in short, my dear sir, I was not proof against his solicitations, and he drew from me the most sacred secret of my heart!" *

* Contrast this old perfumed, powdered D'Arblay conversation with the present modern talk. If the two young people wished to hide their emotions nowadays, and express themselves in modest language, the story would run:—

"Whilst I was looking for the books, Lord Orville came in. He looked uncommonly down in the mouth, as he said: 'Is this true, Miss Anville; are you going to cut?'

"'To absquatulate, Lord Orville,' said I, still pretending that I was looking for the books.

"'You're very quick about it,' said he.

"'Guess it's no great loss,' I remarked, as cheerfully as I could.

"'You don't think I'm chaffing?' said Orville, with much emotion.

"'What has Mrs. Selwyn done with the books?' I went on.

"'What, going?' said he, 'and going for good? I wish I was such a good-plucked one as you, Miss Anville,'" &c.

The conversation, you perceive, might be easily written down to this key; and if the hero and heroine were modern, they would not be suffered to go through their dialogue on stilts, but would converse in the natural graceful way at present customary. By the way, what a strange custom that is in modern lady novelists to make the men bully the women! In the time of

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Other people may not much like this extract, madam, from your favourite novel, but when you come to read it, *you* will like it. I suspect that when you read that book which you so love, you read it *à deux*. Did you not yourself pass a winter at Bath, when you were the belle of the assembly? Was there not a Lord Orville in your case too? As you think of him eleven lustres pass away. You look at him with the bright eyes of those days, and your hero stands before you, the brave, the accomplished, the simple, the true gentleman; and he makes the most elegant of bows to one of the most beautiful young women the world ever saw; and he leads you out to the cotillon, to the dear unforgotten music. Hark to the horns of Elfland, blowing, blowing! *Bonne vieille*, you remember their melody, and your heartstrings thrill with it still.

Of your heroic heroes, I think our friend Monseigneur Athos, Count de la Fère, is my favourite. I have read about him from sunrise to sunset with the utmost contentment of mind. He has passed through how many volumes? Forty? Fifty? I wish for my part there were a hundred more, and would never tire of him rescuing prisoners, punishing ruffians, and running scoundrels through the midriff with his most graceful rapier. Ah, Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, you are a magnificent trio. I think I like D'Artagnan in his own Memoirs best. I bought him years and years ago, price fivepence, in a little parchment-covered Cologne-printed volume, at a stall in Gray's Inn Lane. Dumas glorifies him, and makes a Marshal of him; if I remember rightly, the original D'Artagnan was a needy adventurer, who died in exile very early in Louis XIV.'s reign. Did you ever read the "Chevalier d'Harmenthal"? Did you ever read the "Tulipe Noire," as modest as a story by Miss Edgeworth? I think of the prodigal banquets to which this Lucullus of a man has invited me, with thanks and wonder. To what a series of splendid entertainments he has treated me! Where does he find the money for these prodigious feasts? They say that all the works bearing Dumas's name are not written by him. Well? Does not the chief cook have *aides* under him? Did not Rubens's pupils paint on his canvases? Had not Lawrence assistants for his backgrounds? For myself, being also *du métier*, I confess I would often like to have a competent, respectable, and rapid clerk for the business part of my novels; and on his arrival,

Miss Porter and Madame D'Arblay, we have respect, profound bows and curtseys, graceful courtesy, from men to women. In the time of Miss Brontë, absolute rudeness. Is it true, mesdames, that you like rudeness, and are pleased at being ill-used by men? I could point to more than one lady novelist who so represents you.

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at eleven o'clock, would say, "Mr. Jones, if you please, the Archbishop must die this morning in about five pages. Turn to article 'Dropsy' (or what you will) in Encyclopædia. Take care there are no medical blunders in his death. Group his daughters, physicians, and chaplains round him. In Wales's 'London,' letter B, third shelf, you will find an account of Lambeth, and some prints of the place. Colour in with local colouring. The daughter will come down, and speak to her lover in his wherry at Lambeth Stairs," &c. &c. Jones (an intelligent young man) examines the medical, historical, topographical books necessary; his chief points out to him in Jeremy Taylor (fol., London, M.DCLV.) a few remarks, such as might befit a dear old archbishop departing this life. When I come back to dress for dinner, the Archbishop is dead on my table in five pages; medicine, topography, theology, all right; and Jones has gone home to his family some hours. Sir Christopher is the architect of St. Paul's. He has not laid the stones or carried up the mortar. There is a great deal of carpenter's and joiner's work in novels which surely a smart professional hand might supply. A smart professional hand! I give you my word, there seem to me parts of novels—let us say the love-making, the "business," the villain in the cupboard, and so forth, which I should like to order John Footman to take in hand, as I desire him to bring the coals and polish the boots. Ask *me* indeed to pop a robber under a bed; to hide a will which shall be forthcoming in due season; or at my time of life to write a namby-pamby love conversation between Emily and Lord Arthur! I feel ashamed of myself, and especially when my business obliges me to do the love-passages, I blush so, though quite alone in my study, that you would fancy I was going off in an apoplexy. Are authors affected by their own works? I don't know about other gentlemen, but if I make a joke myself, I cry; if I write a pathetic scene, I am laughing wildly all the time—at least Tomkins thinks so. You know I am such a cynic!

The editor of the *Cornhill Magazine* (no soft and yielding character like his predecessor, but a man of stern resolution) will only allow these harmless papers to run to a certain length. But for this veto I should gladly have prattled over half a sheet more, and have discoursed on many heroes and heroines of novels whom fond memory brings back to me. Of these books I have been a diligent student from those early days, which are recorded at the commencement of this little essay. Oh, delightful novels, well remembered! Oh, novels sweet and delicious as the raspberry open-tarts of budding boyhood! Do I forget one night after prayers (when we under-boys were sent to bed) lingering at my

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cupboard to read one little half-page more of my dear Walter Scott—and down came the monitor's dictionary upon my head! Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York, I have loved thee faithfully for forty years! Thou wert twenty years old (say) and I but twelve, when I knew thee. At sixty odd, love, most of the ladies of thy Orient race have lost the bloom of youth, and bulged beyond the line of beauty; but to me thou art ever young and fair, and I will do battle with any felon Templar who assails thy fair name.

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ON A PEAR-TREE

A GRACIOUS reader no doubt has remarked that these humble sermons have for subjects some little event which happens at the preacher's own gate, or which falls under his peculiar cognisance. Once, you may remember, we discoursed about a chalk-mark on the door. This morning Betsy, the housemaid, comes with a frightened look, and says, "Law, mum! there's three bricks taken out of the garden wall, and the branches broke, and all the pears taken off the pear-tree!" Poor peaceful suburban pear-tree! Gaol-birds have hopped about thy branches, and robbed them of their smoky fruit. But those bricks removed; that ladder evidently prepared, by which unknown marauders may enter and depart from my little Englishman's castle; is not this a subject of thrilling interest, and may it not *be continued in a future number?*—that is the terrible question. Suppose, having escaladed the outer wall, the miscreants take a fancy to storm the castle? Well—well! we are armed; we are numerous; we are men of tremendous courage, who will defend our spoons with our lives; and there are barracks close by (thank goodness!) whence, at the noise of our shouts and firing, at least a thousand bayonets will bristle to our rescue.

What sound is yonder? A church bell. I might go myself, but how listen to the sermon? I am thinking of those thieves who have made a ladder of my wall, and a prey of my pear-tree. They may be walking to church, at this moment, neatly shaved, in clean linen, with every outward appearance of virtue. If I went, I know I should be watching the congregation, and thinking, "Is that one of the fellows who came over my wall?" If, after the reading of the eighth commandment, a man sang out with particular energy, "Incline our hearts to keep this law," I should think, "Aha, Master Basso, did you have pears for breakfast this morning?" Crime is walking round me, that is clear. Who is the perpetrator? . . . What a changed aspect the world has, since these last few lines were written! I have been walking round about my premises, and in consultation with a gentleman in a single-breasted blue coat,

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with pewter buttons, and a tape ornament on the collar. He has looked at the holes in the wall, and the amputated tree. We have formed our plan of defence—*perhaps of attack*. Perhaps some day you may read in the papers, "DARING ATTEMPT AT BURGLARY—HEROIC VICTORY OVER THE VILLAINS," &c. &c. Rascals as yet unknown! perhaps you, too, may read these words, and may be induced to pause in your fatal intention. Take the advice of a sincere friend, and keep off. To find a man writhing in my man-trap, another mayhap impaled in my ditch, to pick off another from my tree (scoundrel! as though he were a pear) will give me no pleasure; but such things may happen. Be warned in time, villains! Or, if you *must* pursue your calling as cracksmen, have the goodness to try some other shutters. Enough! subside into your darkness, children of night! Thieves! we seek not to have *you* hanged—you are but as pegs whereon to hang others.

I may have said before, that if I were going to be hanged myself, I think I should take an accurate note of my sensations, request to stop at some public-house on the road to Tyburn, and be provided with a private room and writing-materials, and give an account of my state of mind. Then, gee up, carter! I beg your reverence to continue your apposite, though not novel remarks on my situation; —and so we drive up to Tyburn turnpike, where an expectant crowd, the obliging sheriffs, and the dexterous and rapid Mr. Ketch are already in waiting.

A number of labouring people are sauntering about the streets and taking their rest on this holiday—fellows who have no more stolen my pears than they have robbed the Crown jewels out of the Tower—and I say I cannot help thinking in my own mind, "Are you the rascal who got over my wall last night?" Is the suspicion haunting my mind written on my countenance? I trust not. What if one man after another were to come up to me and say, "How dare you, sir, suspect me in your mind of stealing your fruit? Go be hanged, you and your jargonels!" You rascal thief! it is not merely three-halfp'orth of sooty fruit you rob me of, it is my peace of mind—my artless innocence and trust in my fellow-creatures, my childlike belief that everything they say is true. How can I hold out the hand of friendship in this condition, when my first impression is, "My good sir, I strongly suspect that you were up my pear-tree last night"? It is a dreadful state of mind. The core is black; the death-stricken fruit drops on the bough, and a great worm is within—fattening, and feasting, and wriggling! Who stole the pears? I say. Is it you, brother? Is it you, madam? Come! are you ready to answer—*respondere parati et cantare pares?* (O shame! shame!)

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Will the villains ever be discovered and punished who stole my fruit? Some unlucky rascals who rob orchards are caught up the tree at once. Some rob through life with impunity. If I, for my part, were to try and get up the smallest tree, on the darkest night, in the most remote orchard, I wager any money I should be found out—be caught by the leg in a man-trap, or have Towler fastening on me. I always am found out; have been; shall be. It's my luck. Other men will carry off bushels of fruit, and get away undetected, unsuspected; whereas I know woe and punishment would fall upon me were I to lay my hand on the smallest pippin. So be it. A man who has this precious self-knowledge will surely keep his hands from picking and stealing, and his feet upon the paths of virtue.

I will assume, my benevolent friend and present reader, that you yourself are virtuous, not from a fear of punishment, but from a sheer love of good; but as you and I walk through life, consider what hundreds of thousands of rascals we must have met, who have not been found out at all. In high places and low, in Clubs and on 'Change, at church or the balls and routs of the nobility and gentry, how dreadful it is for benevolent beings like you and me to have to think these undiscovered though not unsuspected scoundrels are swarming! What is the difference between you and a galley-slave? Is yonder poor wretch at the hulks not a man and a brother too? Have you ever forged, my dear sir? Have you ever cheated your neighbour? Have you ever ridden to Hounslow Heath and robbed the mail? Have you ever entered a first-class railway carriage, where an old gentleman sat alone in a sweet sleep, daintily murdered him, taken his pocket-book, and got out at the next station? You know that this circumstance occurred in France a few months since. If we have travelled in France this autumn we may have met the ingenious gentleman who perpetrated this daring and successful *coup*. We may have found him a well-informed and agreeable man. I have been acquainted with two or three gentlemen who have been discovered after—after the performance of illegal actions. What? That agreeable rattling fellow we met was the celebrated Mr. John Sheppard? Was that amiable quiet gentleman in spectacles the well-known Mr. Fauntleroy? In Hazlitt's admirable paper, "Going to a Fight," he describes a dashing sporting fellow who was in the coach, and who was no less a man than the eminent destroyer of Mr. William Weare. Don't tell me that you would not like to have met (out of business) Captain Sheppard, the Reverend Doctor Dodd, or others rendered famous by their actions and misfortunes, by their lives and their deaths. They are the subjects of ballads, the

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heroes of romance. A friend of mine had the house in Mayfair, out of which poor Doctor Dodd was taken handcuffed. There was the paved hall over which he stepped. That little room at the side was, no doubt, the study where he composed his elegant sermons. Two years since I had the good fortune to partake of some admirable dinners in Tyburnia—magnificent dinners indeed; but rendered doubly interesting from the fact that the house was that occupied by the late Mr. Sadleir. One night the late Mr. Sadleir took tea in that dining-room, and, to the surprise of his butler, went out, having put into his pocket his own cream-jug. The next morning, you know, he was found dead on Hampstead Heath, with the cream-jug lying by him, into which he had poured the poison by which he died. The idea of the ghost of the late gentleman flitting about the room gave a strange interest to the banquet. Can you fancy him taking his tea alone in the dining-room? He empties that cream-jug and puts it in his pocket; and then he opens yonder door, through which he is never to pass again. Now he crosses the hall: and hark! the hall door shuts upon him, and his steps die away. They are gone into the night. They traverse the sleeping city. They lead him into the fields, where the grey morning is beginning to glimmer. He pours something from a bottle into a little silver jug. It touches his lips, the lying lips. Do they quiver a prayer ere that awful draught is swallowed? When the sun rises they are dumb.

I neither knew this unhappy man nor his countryman—Laërtes let us call him—who is at present in exile, having been compelled to fly from remorseless creditors. Laërtes fled to America, where he earned his bread by his pen. I own to having a kindly feeling towards this scapegrace, because, though an exile, he did not abuse the country whence he fled. I have heard that he went away taking no spoil with him, penniless almost; and on his voyage he made acquaintance with a certain Jew; and when he fell sick, at New York, this Jew befriended him, and gave him help and money out of his own store, which was but small. Now, after they had been awhile in the strange city, it happened that the poor Jew spent all his little money, and he too fell ill, and was in great penury. And now it was Laërtes who befriended that Ebrew Jew. He fee'd doctors; he fed and tended the sick and hungry. Go to, Laërtes! I know thee not. It may be thou art justly *exul patriæ*. But the Jew shall intercede for thee, thou not, let us trust, hopeless Christian sinner.

Another exile to the same shore I knew: who did not? Julius Cæsar hardly owed more money than Cucedicus: and, gracious powers! Cucedicus, how did you manage to spend and owe so

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much? All day he was at work for his clients; at night he was occupied in the Public Council. He had neither wife nor children. The rewards which he received for his orations were enough to maintain twenty rhetoricians. Night after night I have seen him eating his frugal meal, consisting but of a fish, a small portion of mutton, and a small measure of Iberian or Trinacrian wine, largely diluted with the sparkling waters of Rhenish Gaul. And this was all he had; and this man earned and paid away talents upon talents; and fled, owing who knows how many more? Does a man earn fifteen thousand pounds a year, toiling by day, talking by night, having horrible unrest in his bed, ghastly terrors at waking, seeing an officer lurking at every corner, a sword of justice for ever hanging over his head—and have for his sole diversion a newspaper, a lonely mutton-chop, and a little sherry and seltzer-water? In the German stories we read how men sell themselves to—a certain Personage, and that Personage cheats them. He gives them wealth; yes, but the gold-pieces turn into worthless leaves. He sets them before splendid banquets: yes, but what an awful grin that black footman has who lifts up the dish-cover; and don't you smell a peculiar sulphurous odour in the dish? Faugh! take it away; I can't eat. He promises them splendours and triumphs. The conqueror's car rolls glittering through the city, the multitudes shout and huzza. Drive on, coachman. Yes, but who is that hanging on behind the carriage? Is this the reward of eloquence, talents, industry? Is this the end of a life's labour? Don't you remember how, when the dragon was infesting the neighbourhood of Babylon, the citizens used to walk dismally out of evenings, and look at the valleys round about strewed with the bones of the victims whom the monster had devoured? O insatiate brute, and most disgusting, brazen, and scaly reptile! Let us be thankful, children, that it has not gobbled us up too. Quick! Let us turn away, and pray that we may be kept out of the reach of his horrible maw, jaw, claw!

When I first came up to London, as innocent as Monsieur Gil Blas, I also fell in with some pretty acquaintances, found my way into several caverns, and delivered my purse to more than one gallant gentleman of the road. One I remember especially—one who never eased me personally of a single maravedi—one than whom I never met a bandit more gallant, courteous, and amiable. Rob me? Rolando feasted me; treated me to his dinner and his wine; kept a generous table for his friends, and I know was most liberal to many of them. How well I remember one of his speculations! It was a great plan for smuggling tobacco. Revenue officers were to be bought off; silent ships were to ply on the Thames;

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cunning depôts were to be established, and hundreds of thousands of pounds to be made by the *coup*. How his eyes kindled as he propounded the scheme to me! How easy and certain it seemed! It might have succeeded: I can't say: but the bold and merry, the hearty and kindly Rolando came to grief—a little matter of imitated signatures occasioned a Bank persecution of Rolando the brave. He walked about armed, and vowed he would never be taken alive: but taken he was: tried, condemned, sentenced to perpetual banishment; and I heard that for some time he was universally popular in the colony which had the honour to possess him. What a song he could sing! 'Twas when the cup was sparkling before us, and Heaven gave a portion of its blue, boys, blue, that I remember the song of Roland at the "Old Piazza Coffee-house." And now where is the "Old Piazza Coffee-house"? Where is Thebes? where is Troy? where is the Colossus of Rhodes?—Ah, Rolando, Rolando! thou wert a gallant captain, a cheery, a handsome, a merry. At *me* thou never presentedst pistol. Thou badest the bumper of burgundy fill, fill for me, giving those who preferred it champagne. *Cœlum non animum*, &c. Do you think he has reformed now that he has crossed the sea, and changed the air? I have my own opinion. Howbeit, Rolando, thou wert a most kind and hospitable bandit. And I love not to think of thee with a chain at thy shin.

Do you know how all these memories of unfortunate men have come upon me? When they came to frighten me this morning by speaking of my robbed pears, my perforated garden wall, I was reading an article in the *Saturday Review* about Rupilius. I have sat near that young man at a public dinner, and beheld him in a gilded uniform. But yesterday he lived in splendour, had long hair, a flowing beard, a jewel at his neck, and a smart surtout. So attired, he stood but yesterday in court; and to-day he sits over a bowl of prison cocoa, with a shaved head, and in a felon's jerkin.

That beard and head shaved, that gaudy deputy-lieutenant's coat exchanged for felon uniform, and your daily bottle of champagne for prison cocoa, my poor Rupilius, what a comfort it must be to have the business brought to an end! Champagne was the honourable gentleman's drink in the House of Commons' dining-room, as I am informed. What uncommonly dry champagne that must have been! When we saw him outwardly happy, how miserable he must have been! when we thought him prosperous, how dismally poor! When the great Mr. Harker, at the public dinners, called out—"Gentlemen, charge your glasses, and please silence for the Honourable Member for Lambeth!" how that Honourable Member must

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have writhed inwardly! One day, when there was a talk of a gentleman's honour being questioned, Rupilius said, "If any man doubted mine, I would knock him down." But that speech was in the way of business. The Spartan boy, who stole the fox, smiled while the beast was gnawing him under his cloak: I promise you Rupilius had some sharp fangs gnashing under his. We have sat at the same feast, I say: we have paid our contribution to the same charity. Ah! when I ask this day for my daily bread, I pray not to be led into temptation, and to be delivered from evil.

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DESSEIN'S

I ARRIVED by the night-mail packet from Dover. The passage had been rough, and the usual consequences had ensued. I was disinclined to travel farther that night on my road to Paris, and knew the Calais hotel of old as one of the cleanest, one of the dearest, one of the most comfortable hotels on the continent of Europe. There is no town more French than Calais. That charming old "Hôtel Dessein," with its court, its gardens, its lordly kitchen, its princely waiter—a gentleman of the old school, who has welcomed the finest company in Europe—have long been known to me. I have read complaints in the *Times*, more than once, I think, that the Dessein bills are dear. A bottle of soda-water certainly costs——well, never mind how much. I remember as a boy, at the "Ship" at Dover (*imperante Carolo Decimo*), when, my place to London being paid, I had but 12s. left after a certain little Paris excursion (about which my benighted parents never knew anything), ordering for dinner a whiting, a beef-steak, and a glass of negus, and the bill was, dinner 7s., glass of negus 2s., waiter 6d., and only half-a-crown left, as I was a sinner, for the guard and coachman on the way to London! And I *was* a sinner. I had gone without leave. What a long, dreary, guilty forty hours' journey it was from Paris to Calais, I remember! How did I come to think of this escapade, which occurred in the Easter vacation of the year 1830? I always think of it when I am crossing to Calais. Guilt, sir, guilt remains stamped on the memory, and I feel easier in my mind now that it is liberated of this old peccadillo. I met my college tutor only yesterday. We were travelling, and stopped at the same hotel. He had the very next room to mine. After he had gone into his apartment, having shaken me quite kindly by the hand, I felt inclined to knock at his door and say, "Doctor Bentley, I beg your pardon, but do you remember, when I was going down at the Easter vacation in 1830, you asked me where I was going to spend my vacation? And I said, With my friend Slingsby, in Huntingdonshire. Well, sir, I grieve to have to confess that I told you a fib. I had got £20 and was going for a lark

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to Paris, where my friend Edwards was staying." There, it is out. The Doctor will read it, for I did not wake him up after all to make my confession, but protest he shall have a copy of this Roundabout sent to him when he returns to his lodge.

They gave me a bedroom there; a very neat room on the first-floor, looking into the pretty garden. The hotel must look pretty much as it did a hundred years ago when *he* visited it. I wonder whether he paid his bill? Yes: his journey was just begun. He had borrowed or got the money somehow. Such a man would spend it liberally enough when he had it, give generously—nay, drop a tear over the fate of the poor fellow whom he relieved. I don't believe a word he says, but I never accused him of stinginess about money. That is a fault of much more virtuous people than he. Mr. Laurence is ready enough with his purse when there are anybody's guineas in it. Still when I went to bed in the room, in *his* room; when I think how I admire, dislike, and have abused him, a certain dim feeling of apprehension filled my mind at the midnight hour. What if I should see his lean figure in the black satin breeches, his sinister smile, his long thin finger pointing to me in the moonlight (for I am in bed, and have popped my candle out), and he should say, "You mistrust me, you hate me, do you? And you, don't you know how Jack, Tom, and Harry, your brother authors, hate *you?*" I grin and laugh in the moonlight, in the midnight, in the silence. "O you ghost in black satin breeches and a wig! I like to be hated by some men," I say. "I know men whose lives are a scheme, whose laughter is a conspiracy, whose smile means something else, whose hatred is a cloak, and I had rather these men should hate me than not."

"My good sir," says he, with a ghastly grin on his lean face, "you have your wish."

"*Après?*" I say. "Please let me go to sleep. I shan't sleep any the worse because——"

"Because there are insects in the bed, and they sting you?" (This is only by way of illustration, my good sir; the animals don't bite me now. All the house at present seems to me excellently clean.) "'Tis absurd to affect this indifference. If you are thin-skinned, and the reptiles bite, they keep you from sleep."

"There are some men who cry out at a flea-bite as loud as if they were torn by a vulture," I growl.

"Men of the *genus irritabile*, my worthy good gentleman!—and you are one."

"Yes, sir, I am of the profession, as you say; and I daresay make a great shouting and crying at a small hurt."

"You are ashamed of that quality by which you earn your sub-

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sistence, and such reputation as you have? Your sensibility is your livelihood, my worthy friend. You feel a pang of pleasure or pain? It is noted in your memory, and some day or other makes its appearance in your manuscript. Why, in your last Roundabout rubbish you mention reading your first novel on the day when King George IV. was crowned. I remember him in his cradle at St. James's, a lovely little babe; a gilt Chinese railing was before him, and I dropped the tear of sensibility as I gazed on the sleeping cherub."

"A tear—a fiddlestick, Mr. STERNE," I growled out, for of course I knew my friend in the wig and satin breeches to be no other than the notorious, nay, celebrated Mr. Laurence Sterne.

"Does not the sight of a beautiful infant charm and melt you, *mon ami?* If not, I pity you. Yes, he was beautiful. I was in London the year he was born. I used to breakfast at the 'Mount Coffee-house.' I did not become the fashion until two years later, when my 'Tristram' made his appearance, who has held his own for a hundred years. By the way, *mon bon monsieur*, how many authors of your present time will last till the next century? Do you think Brown will?"

I laughed with scorn as I lay in my bed (and so did the ghost give a ghastly snigger).

"Brown!" I roared. "One of the most overrated men that ever put pen to paper!"

"What do you think of Jones?"

I grew indignant with this old cynic. "As a reasonable ghost, come out of the other world, you don't mean," I said, "to ask me a serious opinion of Mr. Jones? His books may be very good reading for maid-servants and schoolboys, but you don't ask *me* to read them? As a scholar yourself you must know that——"

"Well, then, Robinson?"

"Robinson, I am told, has merit. I daresay; I never have been able to read his books, and can't, therefore, form any opinion about Mr. Robinson. At least you will allow that I am not speaking in a prejudiced manner about *him*."

"Ah! I see you men of letters have your cabals and jealousies, as we had in my time. There was an Irish fellow by the name of Goldsmith, who used to abuse me; but he went into no genteel company—and faith! it mattered little, his praise or abuse. I never was more surprised than when I heard that Mr Irving, an American gentleman of parts and elegance, had wrote the fellow's life. To make a hero of that man, my dear sir, 'twas ridiculous! You followed in the fashion, I hear, and chose to lay a wreath before this queer little idol. Preposterous! A pretty writer, who

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has turned some neat couplets. Bah! I have no patience with Master Posterity, that has chosen to take up this fellow, and make a hero of him! And there was another gentleman of my time, Mr. Thiefcatcher Fielding, forsooth! a fellow with the strength, and the tastes, and the manners of a porter! What madness has possessed you all to bow before that Calvert Butt of a man?—a creature without elegance or sensibility! The dog had spirits, certainly. I remember my Lord Bathurst praising them: but as for reading his books—*ma foi*, I would as lief go and dive for tripe in a cellar. The man's vulgarity stifles me. He wafts me whiffs of gin. Tobacco and onions are in his great coarse laugh, which choke me, *pardi;* and I don't think much better of the other fellow —the Scots' gallipot purveyor — Peregrine Clinker, Humphrey Random—how did the fellow call his rubbish? Neither of these men had the *bel air*, the *bon ton*, the *je ne sçais quoy*. Pah! If I meet them in my walks by our Stygian river, I give them a wide berth, as that hybrid apothecary fellow would say. An ounce of civet, good apothecary: horrible, horrible! The mere thought of the coarseness of those men gives me the *chair de poule*. Mr. Fielding, especially, has no more sensibility than a butcher in Fleet Market. He takes his heroes out of ale-house kitchens, or worse places still. And this is the person whom Posterity has chosen to honour along with me—*me!* Faith, Monsieur Posterity, you have put me in pretty company, and I see you are no wiser than we were in our time. Mr. Fielding, forsooth! Mr. Tripe and Onions! Mr. Cowheel and Gin! Thank you for nothing, Monsieur Posterity!"

"And so," thought I, "even among these Stygians this envy and quarrelsomeness (if you will permit me the word) survive? What a pitiful meanness! To be sure, I can understand this feeling to a certain extent; a sense of justice will prompt it. In my own case, I often feel myself forced to protest against the absurd praises lavished on contemporaries. Yesterday, for instance, Lady Jones was good enough to praise one of my works. *Très bien.* But in the very next minute she began, with quite as great enthusiasm, to praise Miss Hobson's last romance. My good creature, what is that woman's praise worth who absolutely admires the writings of Miss Hobson? I offer a friend a bottle of '44 claret, fit for a pontifical supper. 'This is capital wine,' says he; 'and now we have finished the bottle, will you give me a bottle of that ordinaire we drank the other day?' Very well, my good man. You are a good judge—of ordinaire, I daresay. Nothing so provokes my anger, and rouses my sense of justice, as to hear other men undeservedly praised. In a word, if you wish to remain

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friends with me, don't praise anybody. You tell me that the Venus de' Medici is beautiful, or Jacob Omnium is tall. *Que diable!* Can't I judge for myself? Haven't I eyes and a foot-rule? I don't think the Venus *is* so handsome, since you press me. She is pretty, but she has no expression. And as for Mr. Omnium, I can see much taller men in a fair for twopence."

"And so," I said, turning round to Mr. Sterne, "you are actually jealous of Mr. Fielding? O you men of letters, you men of letters! Is not the world (your world I mean) big enough for all of you?"

I often travel in my sleep. I often of a night find myself walking in my night-gown about the grey streets. It is awkward at first, but somehow nobody makes any remark. I glide along over the ground with my naked feet. The mud does not wet them. The passers-by do not tread on them. I am wafted over the ground, down the stairs, through the doors. This sort of travelling, dear friends, I am sure you have all of you indulged in.

Well, on the night in question (and, if you wish to know the precise date, it was the 31st of September last), after having some little conversation with Mr. Sterne in our bedroom, I must have got up, though I protest I don't know how, and come downstairs with him into the coffee-room of the "Hôtel Dessein," where the moon was shining, and a cold supper was laid out. I forget what we had—"vol-au-vent d'œufs de Phénix—agneau aux pistaches à la Barmécide,"—what matters what we had?

"As regards supper this is certain, the less you have of it the better."

That is what one of the guests remarked,—a shabby old man, in a wig, and such a dirty, ragged, disreputable dressing-gown that I should have been quite surprised at him, only one never *is* surprised in dr——under certain circumstances.

"I can't eat 'em now," said the greasy man (with his false old teeth, I wonder he could eat anything). "I remember Alvanley eating three suppers once at Carlton House—one night *de petite comité*."

"*Petit comité*, sir," said Mr. Sterne.

"Dammy, sir, let me tell my own story my own way. I say, one night at Carlton House, playing at blind hookey with York, Wales, Tom Raikes, Prince Boothby, and Dutch Sam the boxer, Alvanley ate three suppers, and won three and twenty hundred pounds in ponies. Never saw a fellow with such an appetite, except Wales in his *good* time. But he destroyed the finest digestion a man ever had with maraschino, by Jove—always at it."

"Try mine," said Mr. Sterne.

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"What a doosid queer box!" says Mr. Brummel.

"I had it from a Capuchin friar in this town. The box is but a horn one; but to the nose of sensibility Araby's perfume is not more delicate."

"I call it doosid stale old rappee," says Mr. Brummel—(as for me, I declare I could not smell anything at all in either of the boxes). "Old boy in smock-frock, take a pinch?"

The old boy in the smock-frock, as Mr. Brummel called him, was a very old man, with long white beard, wearing, not a smock-frock, but a shirt; and he had actually nothing else save a rope round his neck, which hung behind his chair in the queerest way.

"Fair sir," he said, turning to Mr. Brummel, "when the Prince of Wales and his father laid siege to our town——"

"What nonsense are you talking, old cock?" says Mr. Brummel; "Wales was never here. His late Majesty George IV. passed through on his way to Hanover. My good man, you don't seem to know what's up at all. What is he talkin' about the siege of Calais? I lived here fifteen years! Ought to know. What's his old name?"

"I am Master Eustace of Saint Peter's," said the old gentleman in the shirt. "When my Lord King Edward laid siege to this city——"

"Laid siege to Jericho!" cries Mr. Brummel. "The old man is cracked—cracked, sir!"

"——Laid siege to this city," continued the old man, "I and five more promised Messire Gautier de Mauny that we would give ourselves up as ransom for the place. And we came before our Lord King Edward, attired as you see, and the fair Queen begged our lives out of her gramercy."

"Queen, nonsense! you mean the Princess of Wales—pretty woman, *petit nez retroussé*, grew monstrous stout?" suggested Mr. Brummel, whose reading was evidently not extensive. "Sir Sidney Smith was a fine fellow, great talker, hook nose, so has Lord Cochrane, so has Lord Wellington. She was very sweet on Sir Sidney."

"Your acquaintance with the history of Calais does not seem to be considerable," said Mr. Sterne to Mr. Brummel, with a shrug.

"Don't it, Bishop?—for I conclude you are a bishop by your wig. I know Calais as well as any man. I lived here for years before I took that confounded consulate at Caen. Lived in this hotel, then at Leleux's. People used to stop here. Good fellows used to ask for poor George Brummel; Hertford did, so did the Duchess of Devonshire. Not know Calais indeed! That is a good joke. Had many a good dinner here: sorry I ever left it."

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"My Lord King Edward," chirped the queer old gentleman in the shirt, "colonised the place with his English, after we had yielded it up to him. I have heard tell they kept it for nigh three hundred years, till my Lord de Guise took it from a fair Queen, Mary of blessed memory, a holy woman. Eh, but Sire Gautier of Mauny was a good knight, a valiant captain, gentle and courteous withal! Do you remember his ransoming the——"

"What is the old fellow twaddlin' about?" cries Brummel. "He is talking about some knight?—I never spoke to a knight, and very seldom to a baronet. Firkins, my butterman, was a knight—a knight and alderman. Wales knighted him once on going into the City."

"I am not surprised that the gentleman should not understand Messire Eustace of Saint Peter's," said the ghostly individual addressed as Mr. Sterne. "Your reading doubtless has not been very extensive?"

"Dammy, sir, speak for yourself!" cries Mr. Brummel testily. "I never professed to be a reading man, but I was as good as my neighbours. Wales wasn't a reading man; York wasn't a reading man; Clarence wasn't a reading man; Sussex was, but he wasn't a man in society. I remember reading your 'Sentimental Journey,' old boy: read it to the Duchess at Beauvoir, I recollect, and she cried over it. Doosid clever amusing book, and does you great credit. Birron wrote doosid clever books, too; so did Monk Lewis. George Spencer was an elegant poet, and my dear Duchess of Devonshire, if she had not been a grande dame, would have beat 'em all, by George! Wales couldn't write: he could sing, but he couldn't spell."

"Ah, you know the great world? so did I in my time, Mr. Brummel. I have had the visiting tickets of half the nobility at my lodgings in Bond Street. But they left me there no more cared for than last year's calendar," sighed Mr. Sterne. "I wonder who is the mode in London now? One of our late arrivals, my Lord Macaulay, has prodigious merit and learning, and, faith, his histories are more amusing than any novels, my own included."

"Don't know, I'm sure; not in my line. Pick this bone of chicken," says Mr. Brummel, trifling with a skeleton bird before him.

"I remember in this city of Calais worse fare than yon bird," said old Mr. Eustace of Saint Peter's. "Marry, sirs, when my Lord King Edward laid siege to us, lucky was he who could get a slice of horse for his breakfast, and a rat was sold at the price of a hare."

"Hare is coarse food, never tasted rat," remarked the Beau.

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"Table-d'hôte poor fare enough for a man like me, who has been accustomed to the best of cookery. But rat—stifle me! I couldn't swallow that: never could bear hardship at all."

"We had to bear enough when my Lord of England pressed us. 'Twas pitiful to see the faces of our women as the siege went on, and hear the little ones asking for dinner."

"Always a bore, children. At dessert, they are bad enough, but at dinner they're the deuce and all," remarked Mr. Brummel.

Messire Eustace of Saint Peter's did not seem to pay much attention to the Beau's remarks, but continued his own train of thought as old men will do.

"I hear," said he, "that there has actually been no war between us of France and you men of England for well-nigh fifty year. Ours has ever been a nation of warriors. And besides her regular found men-at-arms, 'tis said the English of the present time have more than a hundred thousand of archers with weapons that will carry for half a mile. And a multitude have come amongst us of late from a great Western country, never so much as heard of in my time—valiant men and great drawers of the long-bow, and they say they have ships in armour that no shot can penetrate. Is it so? Wonderful! wonderful! The best armour, gossips, is a stout heart."

"And if ever manly heart beat under shirt-frill, thine is that heart, Sir Eustace!" cried Mr. Sterne enthusiastically.

"We, of France, were never accused of lack of courage, sir, in so far as I know," said Messire Eustace. "We have shown as much in a thousand wars with you English by sea and land; and sometimes we conquered, and sometimes, as is the fortune of war, we were discomfited. And notably in a great sea-fight which befell off Ushant on the first of June—— Our Amiral, Messire Villaret de Joyeuse, on board his galleon named the *Vengeur*, being sore pressed by an English bombard, rather than yield the crew of his ship to mercy, determined to go down with all on board of her: and to the cry of Vive la Répub—— or, I would say, of Notre Dame à la Rescousse, he and his crew all sank to an immortal grave——"

"Sir," said I, looking with amazement at the old gentleman, "surely, surely, there is some mistake in your statement. Permit me to observe that the action of the first of June took place five hundred years after your time, and——"

"Perhaps I am confusing my dates," said the old gentleman, with a faint blush. "You say I am mixing up the transactions of my time on earth with the story of my successors? It may be so. We take no count of a few centuries more or less in our dwelling by the darkling Stygian river. Of late, there came amongst us a

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good knight, Messire de Cambronne, who fought against you English in the country of Flanders, being captain of the guard of my Lord the King of France, in a famous battle where you English would have been utterly routed but for the succour of the Prussian heathen. This Messire de Cambronne, when bidden to yield by you of England, answered this, 'The Guard dies but never surrenders;' and fought a long time afterwards, as became a good knight. In our wars with you of England it may have pleased the Fates to give you the greater success; but on our side, also, there has been no lack of brave deeds performed by brave men."

"King Edward may have been the victor, sir, as being the strongest, but you are the hero of the siege of Calais!" cried Mr. Sterne. "Your story is sacred, and your name has been blessed for five hundred years. Wherever men speak of patriotism and sacrifice, Eustace of Saint Pierre shall be beloved and remembered. I prostrate myself before the bare feet which stood before King Edward. What collar of chivalry is to be compared to that glorious order which you wear? Think, sir, how out of the myriad millions of our race, you, and some few more, stand forth as exemplars of duty and honour. *Fortunati nimium!*"

"Sir," said the old gentleman, "I did but my duty at a painful moment; and 'tis matter of wonder to me that men talk still, and glorify such a trifling matter. By Our Lady's grace, in the fair kingdom of France, there are scores of thousands of men, gentle and simple, who would do as I did. Does not every sentinel at his post, does not every archer in the front of battle, brave it, and die where his captain bids him? Who am I that I should be chosen out of all France to be an example of fortitude? I braved no tortures, though these I trust I would have endured with a good heart. I was subject to threats only. Who was the Roman knight of whom the Latin clerk Horatius tells?"

"A Latin clerk? Faith, I forget my Latin," says Mr. Brummel. "Ask the parson here.

"Messire Regulus, I remember, was his name. Taken prisoner by the Saracens, he gave his knightly word, and was permitted to go seek a ransom among his own people. Being unable to raise the sum that was a fitting ransom for such a knight, he returned to Afric, and cheerfully submitted to the tortures which the Paynims inflicted. And 'tis said he took leave of his friends as gaily as though he were going to a village kermes, or riding to his garden-house in the suburb of the city."

"Great, good, glorious man!" cried Mr. Sterne, very much moved. "Let me embrace that gallant hand, and bedew it with my tears! As long as honour lasts thy name shall be remembered.

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See this dewdrop twinkling on my cheek! 'Tis the sparkling tribute that Sensibility pays to Valour. Though in my life and practice I may turn from Virtue, believe me, I never have ceased to honour her! Ah, Virtue! Ah, Sensibility! Oh——"

Here Mr. Sterne was interrupted by a monk of the Order of Saint Francis, who stepped into the room, and begged us all to take a pinch of his famous old rappee. I suppose the snuff was very pungent, for, with a great start, I woke up; and now perceived that I must have been dreaming altogether. "Dessein's" of nowadays is not the "Dessein's" which Mr. Sterne, and Mr. Brummel, and I recollect in the good old times. The town of Calais has bought the old hotel, and "Dessein" has gone over to "Quillacq's." And I was there yesterday. And I remember old diligences, and old postillions in pigtails and jackboots, who were once as alive as I am, and whose cracking whips I have heard in the midnight many and many a time. Now, where are they? Behold, they have been ferried over Styx, and have passed away into limbo.

I wonder what time does my boat go? Ah! here comes the waiter bringing me my little bill.

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ON SOME CARP AT SANS SOUCI

WE have lately made the acquaintance of an old lady of ninety, who has passed the last twenty-five years of her old life in a great metropolitan establishment, the workhouse, namely, of the parish of Saint Lazarus. Stay—twenty-three or four years ago, she came out once, and thought to earn a little money by hop-picking; but being overworked, and having to lie out at night, she got a palsy which has incapacitated her from all further labour, and has caused her poor old limbs to shake ever since.

An illustration of that dismal proverb which tells us how poverty makes us acquainted with strange bedfellows, this poor old shaking body has to lay herself down every night in her workhouse bed by the side of some other old woman with whom she may or may not agree. She herself can't be a very pleasant bedfellow, poor thing! with her shaking old limbs and cold feet. She lies awake a deal of the night, to be sure, not thinking of happy old times, for hers never were happy; but sleepless with aches, and agues, and rheumatism of old age. "The gentleman gave me brandy-and-water," she said, her old voice shaking with rapture at the thought. I never had a great love for Queen Charlotte, but I like her better now from what this old lady told me. The Queen, who loved snuff herself, has left a legacy of snuff to certain poorhouses; and in her watchful nights, this old woman takes a pinch of Queen Charlotte's snuff, "and it do comfort me, sir, that it do!" *Pulveris exigui munus.* Here is a forlorn aged creature, shaking with palsy, with no soul among the great struggling multitude of mankind to care for her, not quite trampled out of life, but passed and forgotten in the rush, made a little happy and soothed in her hours of unrest by this penny legacy. Let me think as I write. (The next month's sermon, thank goodness! is safe to press.) This discourse will appear at the season when I have read that wassail-bowls make their appearance; at the season of pantomime, turkey and sausages, plum-puddings, jollifications for schoolboys; Christmas bills, and reminiscences more or less sad and sweet for elders. If we oldsters are not merry, we shall be having a semblance of

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merriment. We shall see the young folk laughing round the holly-bush. We shall pass the bottle round cosily as we sit by the fire. That old thing will have a sort of festival too. Beef, beer, and pudding will be served to her for that day also. Christmas falls on a Thursday. Friday is the workhouse day for coming out. Mary, remember that old Goody Twoshoes has her invitation for Friday, 26th December! Ninety is she, poor old soul? Ah! what a bonny face to catch under a mistletoe! "Yes, ninety, sir," she says, "and my mother was a hundred, and my grandmother was a hundred and two."

Herself ninety, her mother a hundred, her grandmother a hundred and two? What a queer calculation!

Ninety! Very good, granny: you were born, then, in 1772.

Your mother, we will say, was twenty-seven when you were born, and was born therefore in 1745.

Your grandmother was thirty when her daughter was born, and was born therefore in 1715.

We will begin with the present granny first. My good old creature, you can't of course remember, but that little gentleman for whom your mother was laundress in the Temple was the ingenious Mr. Goldsmith, author of a "History of England," the "Vicar of Wakefield," and many diverting pieces. You were brought almost an infant to his chambers in Brick Court, and he gave you some sugar-candy, for the Doctor was always good to children. That gentleman who well-nigh smothered you by sitting down on you as you lay in a chair asleep was the learned Mr. S. Johnson, whose history of "Rasselas" you have never read, my poor soul; and whose tragedy of "Irene" I don't believe any man in these kingdoms ever perused. That tipsy Scotch gentleman who used to come to the chambers sometimes, and at whom everybody laughed, wrote a more amusing book than any of the scholars, your Mr. Burke and your Mr. Johnson, and your Doctor Goldsmith. Your father often took him home in a chair to his lodgings; and has done as much for Parson Sterne in Bond Street, the famous wit. Of course, my good creature, you remember the Gordon Riots, and crying, "No Popery!" before Mr. Langdale's house, the Popish distiller's, and that bonny fire of my Lord Mansfield's books in Bloomsbury Square? Bless us, what a heap of illuminations you have seen! For the glorious victory over the Americans at Breed's Hill; for the peace in 1814, and the beautiful Chinese bridge in St. James's Park; for the coronation of his Majesty, whom you recollect as Prince of Wales, Goody, don't you? Yes; and you went in a procession of laundresses to pay your respects to his good lady, the injured Queen of England, at Brandenburg House; and you remember your mother

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told you how she was taken to see the Scotch lords executed at the Tower. And as for your grandmother, she was born five months after the battle of Malplaquet, she was; where her poor father was killed, fighting like a bold Briton for the Queen. With the help of a "Wade's Chronology," I can make out ever so queer a history for you, my poor old body, and a pedigree as authentic as many in the peerage-books.

Peerage-books and pedigrees? What does she know about them? Battles and victories, treasons, kings, and beheadings, literary gentlemen, and the like, what have they ever been to her? Granny, did you ever hear of General Wolfe? Your mother may have seen him embark, and your father may have carried a musket under him. Your grandmother may have cried huzza for Marlborough; but what is the Prince Duke to you, and did you ever so much as hear tell of his name? How many hundred or thousand of years had that toad lived who was in the coal at the defunct Exhibition?—and yet he was not a bit better informed than toads seven or eight hundred years younger.

"Don't talk to me your nonsense about Exhibitions, and Prince Dukes, and toads in coals, or coals in toads, or what is it?" says Granny. "I know there was a good Queen Charlotte, for she left me snuff; and it comforts me of a night when I lie awake."

To me there is something very touching in the notion of that little pinch of comfort doled out to Granny, and gratefully inhaled by her in the darkness. Don't you remember what traditions there used to be of chests of plate, bulses of diamonds, laces of inestimable value, sent out of the country privately by the old Queen, to enrich certain relations in M–ckl–nb–rg Str–l–tz? Not all the treasure went. *Non omnis moritur.* A poor old palsied thing at midnight is made happy sometimes as she lifts her shaking old hand to her nose. Gliding noiselessly among the beds where lie the poor creatures huddled in their cheerless dormitory, I fancy an old ghost with a snuff-box that does not creak. "There, Goody, take of my rappee. You will not sneeze, and I shall not say 'God bless you.' But you will think kindly of old Queen Charlotte, won't you? Ah! I had a many troubles, a many troubles. I was a prisoner almost as much as you are. I had to eat boiled mutton every day: *entre nous*, I abominated it. But I never complained. I swallowed it. I made the best of a hard life. We have all our burdens to bear. But hark! I hear the cock-crow, and snuff the morning air." And with this the Royal ghost vanishes up the chimney—if there be a chimney in that dismal harem, where poor old Two-shoes and her companions pass their nights—their dreary nights,

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their restless nights, their cold long nights, shared in what glum companionship, illumined by what a feeble taper!

"Did I understand you, my good Twoshoes, to say that your mother was seven-and-twenty years old when you were born, and that she married your esteemed father when she herself was twenty-five? 1745, then, was the date of your dear mother's birth. I daresay her father was absent in the Low Countries, with his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, under whom he had the honour of carrying a halberd at the famous engagement of Fontenoy —or if not there, he may have been at Preston Pans, under General Sir John Cope, when the wild Highlanders broke through all the laws of discipline and the English lines; and, being on the spot, did he see the famous ghost which didn't appear to Colonel Gardiner of the Dragoons? My good creature, is it possible you don't remember that Doctor Swift, Sir Robert Walpole (my Lord Orford, as you justly say), old Sarah Marlborough, and little Mr. Pope of Twitnam, died in the year of your birth? What a wretched memory you have! What? haven't they a library, and the commonest books of reference at the old convent of Saint Lazarus, where you dwell?"

"Convent of Saint Lazarus, Prince William, Doctor Swift, Atossa, and Mr. Pope of Twitnam! What is the gentleman talking about?" says old Goody, with a "Ho! ho!" and a laugh like an old parrot—you know they live to be as old as Methuselah, parrots do, and a parrot of a hundred is comparrotively young (ho! ho! ho!). Yes, and likewise carp live to an immense old age. Some which Frederick the Great fed at Sans Souci are there now, with great humps of blue mould on their old backs; and they could tell all sorts of queer stories, if they chose to speak—but they are very silent, carp are—of their nature *peu communicatives*. Oh! what has been thy long life, old Goody, but a dole of bread and water and a perch on a cage; a dreary swim round and round a Lethe of a pond? What are Rossbach or Jena to those mouldy ones? and do they know it is a grandchild of England who brings bread to feed them?

No! Those Sans Souci carp may live to be a thousand years old and have nothing to tell but that one day is like another; and the history of friend Goody Twoshoes has not much more variety than theirs. Hard labour, hard fare, hard bed, numbing cold all night, and gnawing hunger most days. That is her lot. Is it lawful in my prayers to say, "Thank Heaven, I am not as one of these"? If I were eighty, would I like to feel the hunger always gnawing, gnawing? to have to get up and make a bow when Mr. Bumble the beadle entered the common room? To have to listen

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to Miss Prim, who came to give me her ideas of the next world? If I were eighty, I own I should not like to have to sleep with another gentleman of my own age, gouty, a bad sleeper, kicking in his old dreams, and snoring; to march down my vale of years at word of command, accommodating my tottering old steps to those of the other prisoners in my dingy hopeless old gang; to hold out a trembling hand for a sickly pittance of gruel, and say, "Thank you, ma'am," to Miss Prim when she has done reading her sermon. John! when Goody Twoshoes comes next Friday, I desire she may not be disturbed by theological controversies. You have a very fair voice, and I heard you and the maids singing a hymn very sweetly the other night, and was thankful that our humble household should be in such harmony. Poor old Twoshoes is so old and toothless and quaky, that she can't sing a bit; but don't be giving yourself airs over her, because she can't sing and you can. Make her comfortable at our kitchen hearth. Set that old kettle to sing by our hob. Warm her old stomach with nut-brown ale and a toast laid in the fire. Be kind to the poor old schoolgirl of ninety, who has had leave to come out for a day of Christmas holiday. Shall there be many more Christmases for thee? Think of the ninety she has seen already; the fourscore and ten cold, cheerless, nipping New Years!

If you were in her place, would you like to have a remembrance of better early days, when you were young, and happy, and loving, perhaps; or would you prefer to have no past on which your mind could rest? About the year 1788, Goody, were your cheeks rosy, and your eyes bright, and did some young fellow in powder and a pigtail look in them? We may grow old, but to us some stories never are old. On a sudden they rise up, not dead, but living—not forgotten, but freshly remembered. The eyes gleam on us as they used to do. The dear voice thrills in our hearts. The rapture of the meeting, the terrible terrible parting, again and again the tragedy is acted over. Yesterday, in the street, I saw a pair of eyes so like two which used to brighten at my coming once, that the whole past came back as I walked lonely, in the rush of the Strand, and I was young again in the midst of joys and sorrows, alike sweet and sad, alike sacred and fondly remembered.

If I tell a tale out of school, will any harm come to my old schoolgirl? Once, a lady gave her a half-sovereign, which was a source of great pain and anxiety to Goody Twoshoes. She sewed it away in her old stays somewhere, thinking here at least was a safe investment—(*vestis*—a vest—an investment,—pardon me, thou poor old thing, but I cannot help the pleasantry). And what do you think? Another *pensionnaire* of the establishment cut the

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coin out of Goody's stays—*an old woman who went upon two crutches!* Faugh, the old witch! What? Violence amongst these toothless, tottering, trembling, feeble ones? Robbery amongst the penniless? Dogs coming and snatching Lazarus's crumbs out of his lap? Ah, how indignant Goody was as she told the story! To that pond at Potsdam where the carp live for hundreds of hundreds of years, with hunches of blue mould on their back, I daresay the little Prince and Princess of Preussen-Britannien come sometimes with crumbs and cakes to feed the mouldy ones. Those eyes may have goggled from beneath the weeds at Napoleon's jackboots; they have seen Frederick's lean shanks reflected in their pool; and perhaps Monsieur de Voltaire has fed them—and now, for a crumb of biscuit they will fight, push, hustle, rob, squabble, gobble, relapsing into their tranquillity when the ignoble struggle is over. Sans souci, indeed! It is mighty well writing "Sans souci" over the gate; but where is the gate through which Care has not slipped? She perches on the shoulders of the sentry in the sentry-box: she whispers the porter sleeping in his arm-chair: she glides up the staircase, and lies down between the king and queen in their bed-royal: this very night I daresay she will perch upon poor old Goody Twoshoes's meagre bolster, and whisper, "Will the gentleman and those ladies ask me again? No, no; they will forget poor old Twoshoes." Goody! For shame of yourself! Do not be cynical. Do not mistrust your fellow-creatures. What? Has the Christmas morning dawned upon thee ninety times? For fourscore and ten years has it been thy lot to totter on this earth, hungry and obscure? Peace and goodwill to thee, let us say at this Christmas season. Come, drink, eat, rest awhile at our hearth, thou poor old pilgrim! And of the bread which God's bounty gives us, I pray, brother reader, we may not forget to set aside a part for those noble and silent poor, from whose innocent hands war has torn the means of labour. Enough! As I hope for beef at Christmas, I vow a note shall be sent to Saint Lazarus Union House, in which Mr. Roundabout requests the honour of Mrs. Twoshoes's company on Friday, 26th December.

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AUTOUR DE MON CHAPEAU

NEVER have I seen a more noble tragic face. In the centre of the forehead there was a great furrow of care, towards which the brows rose piteously. What a deep solemn grief in the eyes! They looked blankly at the object before them, but through it, as it were, and into the grief beyond. In moments of pain, have you not looked at some indifferent object so? It mingles dumbly with your grief, and remains afterwards connected with it in your mind. It may be some indifferent thing—a book which you were reading at the time when you received her farewell letter (how well you remember the paragraph afterwards—the shape of the words, and their position on the page); the words you were writing when your mother came in, and said it was all over—she was MARRIED—Emily married—to that insignificant little rival at whom you have laughed a hundred times in her company. Well, well; my friend and reader, whoe'er you be—old man or young, wife or maiden—you have had your grief-pang. Boy, you have lain awake the first night at school, and thought of home. Worse still, man, you have parted from the dear ones with bursting heart: and, lonely boy, recall the bolstering an unfeeling comrade gave you; and, lonely man, just torn from your children—their little tokens of affection yet in your pocket—pacing the deck at evening in the midst of the roaring ocean, you can remember how you were told that supper was ready, and how you went down to the cabin and had brandy-and-water and biscuit. You remember the taste of them. Yes; for ever. You took them whilst you and your Grief were sitting together, and your Grief clutched you round the soul. Serpent, how you have writhed round me, and bitten me! Remorse, Remembrance, &c., come in the night season, and I feel you gnawing, gnawing! . . . I tell you that man's face was like Laocoon's (which, by the way, I always think overrated. The real head is at Brussels, at the Duke Daremberg's, not at Rome).

That man! What man? That man of whom I said that his magnificent countenance exhibited the noblest tragic woe. He was not of European blood. He was handsome, but not of European

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beauty His face white—not of a northern whiteness; his eyes protruding somewhat, and rolling in their grief. Those eyes had seen the Orient sun, and his beak was the eagle's. His lips were full. The beard, curling round them, was unkempt and tawny. The locks were of a deep deep coppery red. The hands, swart and powerful, accustomed to the rough grasp of the wares in which he dealt, seemed unused to the flimsy artifices of the bath. He came from the Wilderness, and its sands were on his robe, his cheek, his tattered sandal, and the hardy foot it covered.

And his grief—whence came his sorrow? I will tell you. He bore it in his hand. He had evidently just concluded the compact by which it became his. His business was that of a purchaser of domestic raiment. At early dawn—nay, at what hour when the city is alive—do we not all hear the nasal cry of "Clo"? In Paris, *Habits, Galons, Marchand d'habits*, is the twanging signal with which the wandering merchant makes his presence known. It was in Paris I saw this man. Where else have I not seen him? In the Roman Ghetto—at the Gate of David, in his fathers' once imperial city. The man I mean was an itinerant vendor and purchaser of wardrobes—what you call an—— Enough! You know his name.

On his left shoulder hung his bag; and he held in that hand a white hat, which I am sure he had just purchased, and which was the cause of the grief which smote his noble features. Of course I cannot particularise the sum, but he had given too much for that hat. He felt he might have got the thing for less money. It was not the amount, I am sure; it was the principle involved. He had given fourpence (let us say) for that which threepence would have purchased. He had been done: and a manly shame was upon him, that he, whose energy, acuteness, experience, point of honour, should have made him the victor in any mercantile duel in which he should engage, had been overcome by a porter's wife, who very likely sold him the old hat, or by a student who was tired of it. I can understand his grief. Do I seem to be speaking of it in a disrespectful or flippant way? Then you mistake me. He had been outwitted. He had desired, coaxed, schemed, haggled, got what he wanted, and now found he had paid too much for his bargain. You don't suppose I would ask you to laugh at that man's grief? It is you, clumsy cynic, who are disposed to sneer, whilst it may be tears of genuine sympathy are trickling down this nose of mine. What do you mean by laughing? If you saw a wounded soldier on the field of battle, would you laugh? If you saw a ewe robbed of her lamb, would you laugh, you brute? It is you who are the cynic, and have no feeling: and you sneer because

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that grief is unintelligible to you which touches my finer sensibility. The OLD-CLOTHES'-MAN had been defeated in one of the daily battles of his most interesting, chequered, adventurous life.

Have you ever figured to yourself what such a life must be? The pursuit and conquest of twopence must be the most eager and fascinating of occupations. We might all engage in that business if we would. Do not whist-players, for example, toil, and think, and lose their temper over sixpenny points? They bring study, natural genius, long forethought, memory, and careful historical experience to bear upon their favourite labour. Don't tell me that it is the sixpenny points, and five shillings the rub, which keeps them for hours over their painted pasteboard. It is the desire to conquer. Hours pass by. Night glooms. Dawn, it may be, rises unheeded; and they sit calling for fresh cards at the "Portland," or the "Union," while waning candles splutter in the sockets, and languid waiters snooze in the ante-room. Sol rises. Jones has lost four pounds: Brown has won two; Robinson lurks away to his family house and (mayhap indignant) Mrs. R. Hours of evening, night, morning, have passed away whilst they have been waging this sixpenny battle. What is the loss of four pounds to Jones, the gain of two to Brown? B. is, perhaps, so rich that two pounds more or less are as naught to him; J. is so hopelessly involved that to win four pounds cannot benefit his creditors, or alter his condition; but they play for that stake: they put forward their best energies: they ruff, finesse (what are the technical words, and how do I know?). It is but a sixpenny game if you like; but they want to win it. So as regards my friend yonder with the hat. He stakes his money: he wishes to win the game, not the hat merely. I am not prepared to say that he is not inspired by a noble ambition. Cæsar wished to be first in a village. If first of a hundred yokels, why not first of two? And my friend the old-clothes'-man wishes to win his game, as well as to turn his little sixpence.

Suppose in the game of life—and it is but a twopenny game after all—you are equally eager of winning. Shall you be ashamed of your ambition, or glory in it? There are games, too, which are becoming to particular periods of life. I remember in the days of our youth, when my friend Arthur Bowler was an eminent cricketer. Slim, swift, strong, well-built, he presented a goodly appearance on the ground in his flannel uniform. *Militâsti non sine gloria*, Bowler my boy! Hush! We tell no tales. Mum is the word. Yonder comes Charley his son. Now Charley his son has taken the field, and is famous among the eleven of his school. Bowler senior, with his capacious waistcoat, &c., waddling

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after a ball, would present an absurd object, whereas it does the eyes good to see Bowler junior scouring the plain—a young exemplar of joyful health, vigour, activity. The old boy wisely contents himself with amusements more becoming his age and waist; takes his sober ride; visits his farm soberly—busies himself about his pigs, his ploughing, his peaches, or what not. Very small *routinier* amusements interest him; and (thank goodness!) nature provides very kindly for kindly-disposed fogies. We relish those things which we scorned in our lusty youth. I see the young folk of an evening kindling and glowing over their delicious novels. I look up and watch the eager eye flashing down the page, being, for my part, perfectly contented with my twaddling old volume of "Howel's Letters," or the *Gentleman's Magazine*. I am actually arrived at such a calm frame of mind that I like batter-pudding. I never should have believed it possible; but it is so. Yet a little while, and I may relish water-gruel. It will be the age of *mon lait de poule et mon bonnet de nuit*. And then—the cotton extinguisher is pulled over the old noddle, and the little flame of life is popped out.

Don't you know elderly people who make learned notes in Army Lists, Peerages, and the like? This is the batter-pudding, water-gruel of old age. The worn-out old digestion does not care for stronger food. Formerly it could swallow twelve hours' tough reading, and digest an encyclopædia.

If I had children to educate, I would, at ten or twelve years of age, have a professor, or professoress, of whist for them, and cause them to be well grounded in that great and useful game. You cannot learn it well when you are old, any more than you can learn dancing or billiards. In our house at home we youngsters did not play whist because we were dear obedient children, and the elders said playing at cards was "a waste of time." A waste of time, my good people! *Allons!* What do elderly home-keeping people do of a night after dinner? Darby gets his newspaper; my dear Joan her *Missionary Magazine* or her volume of Cumming's Sermons—and don't you know what ensues? Over the arm of Darby's arm-chair the paper flutters to the ground unheeded, and he performs the trumpet obbligato *que vous savez* on his old nose. My dear old Joan's head nods over her sermon (awakening though the doctrine may be). Ding, ding, ding: can that be ten o'clock? It is time to send the servants to bed, my dear—and to bed master and mistress go too. But they have not wasted their time playing at cards. Oh no! I belong to a club where there is whist of a night; and not a little amusing is it to hear Brown speak of Thompson's play, and *vice versâ*. But

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there is one man—Greatorex let us call him—who is the acknowledged captain and primus of all the whist-players. We all secretly admire him—I, for my part, watch him in private life, hearken to what he says, note what he orders for dinner, and have that feeling of awe for him that I used to have as a boy for the cock of the school. Not play at whist? "Quelle triste vieillesse vous vous préparez!" were the words of the great and good Bishop of Autun. I can't. It is too late now. Too late! too late! Ah! humiliating confession! That joy might have been clutched, but the life-stream has swept us by it—the swift life-stream rushing to the nearing sea. Too late! too late! Twentystone, my boy! when you read in the papers "Valse à deux temps," and all the fashionable dances taught to adults by "Miss Lightfoots," don't you feel that you would like to go in and learn? Ah, it is too late! You have passed the *choreas*, Master Twentystone, and the young people are dancing without you.

I don't believe much of what my Lord Byron the poet says; but when he wrote, "So, for a good old gentlemanly vice, I think I shall put up with avarice," I think his Lordship meant what he wrote, and if he practised what he preached, shall not quarrel with him. As an occupation in declining years, I declare I think saving is useful, amusing, and not unbecoming. It must be a perpetual amusement. It is a game that can be played by day, by night, at home and abroad, and at which you must win in the long run. I am tired and want a cab. The fare to my house, say, is two shillings. The cabman will naturally want half-a-crown. I pull out my book. I show him the distance is exactly three miles and fifteen hundred and ninety yards. I offer him my card—my winning card. As he retires with the two shillings, blaspheming inwardly, every curse is a compliment to my skill. I have played him and beat him; and a sixpence is my spoil and just reward. This is a game, by the way, which women play far more cleverly than we do. But what an interest it imparts to life! During the whole drive home I know I shall have my game at the journey's end; am sure of my hand, and shall beat my adversary. Or I can play in another way. I won't have a cab at all, I will wait for the omnibus: I will be one of the damp fourteen in that steaming vehicle. I will wait about in the rain for an hour, and 'bus after 'bus shall pass, but I will not be beat. I *will* have a place, and get it at length, with my boots wet through, and an umbrella dripping between my legs. I have a rheumatism, a cold, a sore throat, a sulky evening,—a doctor's bill to-morrow perhaps? Yes, but I have won my game, and am gainer of a shilling on this rubber.

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If you play this game all through life it is wonderful what daily interest it has, and amusing occupation. For instance, my wife goes to sleep after dinner over her volume of sermons. As soon as the dear soul is sound asleep, I advance softly and puff out her candle. Her pure dreams will be all the happier without that light; and, say she sleeps an hour, there is a penny gained.

As for clothes, *parbleu!* there is not much money to be saved in clothes, for the fact is, as a man advances in life—as he becomes an *Ancient Briton* (mark the pleasantry)—he goes without clothes. When my tailor proposes something in the way of a change of raiment, I laugh in his face. My blue coat and brass buttons will last these ten years. It is seedy? What then? I don't want to charm anybody in particular. You say that my clothes are shabby? What do I care? When I wished to look well in somebody's eyes, the matter may have been different. But now, when I receive my bill of £10 (let us say) at the year's end, and contrast it with old tailors' reckonings, I feel that I have played the game with master tailor, and beat him; and my old clothes are a token of the victory.

I do not like to give servants board-wages, though they are cheaper than household bills: but I know they save out of board-wages, and so beat me. This shows that it is not the money but the game which interests me. So about wine. I have it good and dear. I will trouble you to tell me where to get it good and cheap. You may as well give me the address of a shop where I can buy meat for fourpence a pound, or sovereigns for fifteen shillings apiece. At the game of auctions, docks, shy wine-merchants, depend on it there is *no* winning; and I would as soon think of buying jewellery at an auction in Fleet Street as of purchasing wine from one of your dreadful needy wine-agents such as infest every man's door. Grudge myself good wine? As soon grudge my horse corn. *Merci!* that would be a very losing game indeed, and your humble servant has no relish for such.

But in the very pursuit of saving there must be a hundred harmless delights and pleasures which we who are careless necessarily forego. What do you know about the natural history of your household? Upon your honour and conscience, do you know the price of a pound of butter? Can you say what sugar costs, and how much your family consumes and ought to consume? How much lard do you use in your house? As I think on these subjects I own I hang down the head of shame. I suppose for a moment that you, who are reading this, are a middle-aged gentleman, and paterfamilias. Can you answer the above questions? You know, sir, you cannot. Now turn round, lay down the book, and suddenly ask Mrs. Jones and your daughters if *they* can answer? They

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cannot. They look at one another. They pretend they can answer. They can tell you the plot and principal characters of the last novel. Some of them know something about history, geology, and so forth. But of the natural history of home—*Nichts*, and for shame on you all! *Honnis soyez!* For shame on you? for shame on us!

In the early morning I hear a sort of call or *jodel* under my window, and know 'tis the matutinal milkman leaving his can at my gate. O household gods! have I lived all these years and don't know the price or the quantity of the milk which is delivered in that can? Why don't I know? As I live, if I live till to-morrow morning, as soon as I hear the call of Lactantius, I will dash out upon him. How many cows? How much milk, on an average, all the year round? What rent? What cost of food and dairy servants? What loss of animals, and average cost of purchase? If I interested myself properly about my pint (or hogshead, whatever it be) of milk, all this knowledge would ensue; all this additional interest in life. What is this talk of my friend, Mr. Lewes, about objects at the seaside, and so forth?* Objects at the seaside? Objects at the area-bell: objects before my nose: objects which the butcher brings me in his tray: which the cook dresses and puts down before me, and over which I say grace! My daily life is surrounded with objects which ought to interest me. The pudding I eat (or refuse, that is neither here nor there; and, between ourselves, what I have said about batter-pudding may be taken *cum grano*—we are not come to *that* yet, except for the sake of argument or illustration)—the pudding, I say, on my plate, the eggs that made it, the fire that cooked it, the tablecloth on which it is laid, and so forth—are each and all of these objects a knowledge of which I may acquire—a knowledge of the cost and production of which I might advantageously learn? To the man who *does* know these things, I say the interest of life is prodigiously increased. The milkman becomes a study to him; the baker a being he curiously and tenderly examines. Go, Lewes, and clap a hideous sea-anemone into a glass: I will put a cabman under mine, and make a vivisection of a butcher. O Lares, Penates, and gentle household gods, teach me to sympathise with all that comes within my doors! Give me an interest in the butcher's book. Let me look forward to the ensuing number of the grocer's account with eagerness. It seems ungrateful to my kitchen-chimney not to know the cost of sweeping it; and I trust that many a man who reads this, and muses on it, will feel, like the writer, ashamed of himself, and hang down his head humbly.

* "Seaside Studies." By G. H. Lewes.

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Now, if to this household game you could add a little money interest, the amusement would be increased far beyond the mere money value, as a game at cards for sixpence is better than a rubber for nothing. If you can interest yourself about sixpence, all life is invested with a new excitement. From sunrise to sleeping you can always be playing that game—with butcher, baker, coal-merchant, cabman, omnibus-man—nay, diamond-merchant and stockbroker. You can bargain for a guinea over the price of a diamond necklace, or for a sixteenth per cent. in a transaction at the Stock Exchange. We all know men who have this faculty who are not ungenerous with their money. They give it on great occasions. They are more able to help than you and I who spend ours, and say to poor Prodigal who comes to us out at elbow, "My dear fellow, I should have been delighted: but I have already anticipated my quarter, and am going to ask Screwby if he can do anything for me."

In this delightful, wholesome, ever-novel twopenny game, there is a danger of excess, as there is in every other pastime or occupation of life. If you grow too eager for your twopence, the acquisition or the loss of it may affect your peace of mind, and peace of mind is better than any amount of twopences. My friend the old-clothes'-man, whose agonies over the hat have led to this rambling disquisition, has, I very much fear, by a too eager pursuit of small profits disturbed the equanimity of a mind that ought to be easy and happy. "Had I stood out," he thinks, "I might have had the hat for threepence," and he doubts whether, having given fourpence for it, he will ever get back his money. My good Shadrach, if you go through life passionately deploring the irrevocable, and allow yesterday's transactions to embitter the cheerfulness of to-day and to-morrow—as lief walk down to the Seine, souse in, hats, body, clothes-bag and all, and put an end to your sorrow and sordid cares. Before and since Mr. Franklin wrote his pretty apologue of the Whistle, have we not all made bargains of which we repented, and coveted and acquired objects for which we have paid too dearly? Who has not purchased his hat in some market or other? There is General M'Clellan's cocked-hat for example: I daresay he was eager enough to wear it, and he has learned that it is by no means cheerful wear. There were the military beavers of Messeigneurs of Orleans:* they wore them gallantly in the face of battle; but I suspect they were glad enough to pitch them into the James River and come home in mufti. Ah, *mes amis! à chacun son shako!* I was looking at a bishop the other day,

* Two cadets of the House of Orleans who served as volunteers under General M'Clellan in his campaign against Richmond.

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and thinking, "My right reverend lord, that broad-brim and rosette must bind your great broad forehead very tightly, and give you many a headache. A good easy wideawake were better for you, and I would like to see that honest face with a cutty-pipe in the middle of it." There is my Lord Mayor. My once dear lord, my kind friend, when your two years' reign was over, did you not jump for joy and fling your *chapeau-bras* out of window: and hasn't *that* hat cost you a pretty bit of money? There, in a splendid travelling chariot, in the sweetest bonnet, all trimmed with orange-blossoms and Chantilly lace, sits my Lady Rosa, with old Lord Snowden by her side. Ah, Rosa! what a price have you paid for that hat which you wear; and is your Ladyship's coronet not purchased too dear? Enough of hats. Sir, or Madam, I take off mine, and salute you with profound respect.

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*ON ALEXANDRINES**

A LETTER TO SOME COUNTRY COUSINS

DEAR COUSINS,—Be pleased to receive herewith a packet of Mayall's photographs, and copies of *Illustrated News*, *Illustrated Times*, *London Review*, *Queen*, and *Observer*, each containing an account of the notable festivities of the past week. If, besides these remembrances of home, you have a mind to read a letter from an old friend, behold here it is. When I was at school, having left my parents in India, a good-natured captain or colonel would come sometimes and see us Indian boys, and talk to us about papa and mamma, and give us coins of the realm, and write to our parents, and say, "I drove over yesterday and saw Tommy at Doctor Birch's. I took him to the 'George,' and gave him a dinner. His appetite is fine. He states that he is reading 'Cornelius Nepos,' with which he is much interested. His masters report," &c. And though Doctor Birch wrote by the same mail a longer, fuller, and official statement, I have no doubt the distant parents preferred the friend's letter, with its artless, possibly ungrammatical, account of their little darling.

I have seen the young heir of Britain. These eyes have beheld him and his bride, on Saturday in Pall Mall, and on Tuesday in the nave of Saint George's Chapel at Windsor, when the young Princess Alexandra of Denmark passed by with her blooming procession of bridesmaids; and half-an-hour later, when the Princess of Wales came forth from the chapel, her husband by her side robed in the purple mantle of the famous Order which his forefather established here five hundred years ago. We were to see her yet once again, when her open carriage passed out of the Castle gate to the station of the near railway which was to convey her to Southampton.

Since womankind existed, has any woman ever had such a greeting? At ten hours' distance, there is a city far more magnificent than ours. With every respect for Kensington turnpike, I

* This paper, it is almost needless to say, was written just after the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales in March 1863.

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own that the Arc de l'Etoile at Paris is a much finer entrance to an Imperial capital. In our black, orderless, zigzag streets, we can show nothing to compare with the magnificent array of the Rue de Rivoli, that enormous regiment of stone stretching for five miles and presenting arms before the Tuileries. Think of the late Fleet Prison and Waithman's Obelisk, and of the Place de la Concorde and the Luxor Stone! "The finest site in Europe," as Trafalgar Square has been called by some obstinate British optimist, is disfigured by trophies, fountains, columns, and statues so puerile, disorderly, and hideous, that a lover of the arts must hang the head of shame as he passes to see our dear old queen city arraying herself so absurdly; but when all is said and done, we can show one or two of the greatest sights in the world. I doubt if any Roman festival was as vast or as striking as the Derby day, or if any Imperial triumph could show such a prodigious muster of faithful people as our young Princess saw on Saturday, when the nation turned out to greet her. The calculators are squabbling about the numbers of hundreds of thousands, of millions, who came forth to see her and bid her welcome. Imagine beacons flaming, rockets blazing, yards manned, ships and forts saluting with their thunder, every steamer and vessel, every town and village from Ramsgate to Gravesend, swarming with happy gratulation; young girls with flowers scattering roses before her; staid citizens and aldermen pushing and squeezing and panting to make the speech, and bow the knee, and bid her welcome! Who is this who is honoured with such a prodigious triumph, and received with a welcome so astonishing? A year ago we had never heard of her. I think about her pedigree and family not a few of us are in the dark still, and I own, for my part, to be much puzzled by the allusions of newspaper genealogists and bards and skalds to Vikings, Berserkers, and so forth. But it would be interesting to know how many hundreds of thousands of photographs of the fair bright face have by this time made it beloved and familiar in British homes. Think of all the quiet country nooks from Land's End to Caithness, where kind eyes have glanced at it. The farmer brings it home from market; the Curate from his visit to the Cathedral town; the rustic folk peer at it through the little village shop-window; the squire's children gaze on it round the drawing-room table; every eye that beholds it looks tenderly on its bright beauty and sweet artless grace, and young and old pray God bless her. We have an elderly friend (a certain Goody Twoshoes) who inhabits, with many other old ladies, the Union House of the parish of Saint Lazarus in Soho. One of your cousins from this house went to see her, and found Goody and her companion crones all in a flutter of excitement about the marriage.

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The whitewashed walls of their bleak dormitory were ornamented with prints out of the illustrated journals, and hung with festoons and true-lovers' knots of tape and coloured paper; and the old bodies had had a good dinner, and the old tongues were chirping and clacking away, all eager, interested, sympathising; and one very elderly and rheumatic Goody, who is obliged to keep her bed (and has, I trust, an exaggerated idea of the cares attending on Royalty), said, "Pore thing, pore thing! I pity her." Yes, even in that dim place there was a little brightness and a quavering huzza, a contribution of a mite subscribed by those dozen poor old widows to the treasure of loyalty with which the nation endows the Prince's bride.

Three hundred years ago, when our dread Sovereign Lady Elizabeth came to take possession of her realm and capital city, Holinshed, if you please (whose pleasing history of course you carry about with you), relates in his fourth volume folio, that—"At hir entring the citie, she was of the people received maruellous intierlie, as appeared by the assemblies, praiers, welcommings, cries, and all other signes which argued a woonderfull earnest loue:" and at various halting-places on the Royal progress children habited like angels appeared out of allegoric edifices and spoke verses to her—

"Welcome, O Queen, as much as heart can think;
Welcome again, as much as tongue can tell;
Welcome to joyous tongues and hearts that will not shrink.
God thee preserve, we pray, and wish thee ever well!"

Our new Princess, you may be sure, has also had her Alexandrines, and many minstrels have gone before her singing her praises. Mr. Tupper, who begins in very great force and strength, and who proposes to give her no less than eight hundred thousand welcomes in the first twenty lines of his ode, is not satisfied with this most liberal amount of acclamation, but proposes at the end of his poem a still more magnificent subscription. Thus we begin, "A hundred thousand welcomes, a hundred thousand welcomes." (In my copy the figures are in the well-known Arabic numerals, but let us have the numbers literally accurate):—

"A hundred thousand welcomes!
A hundred thousand welcomes!
And a hundred thousand more!
O happy heart of England,
Shout aloud and sing, land,
As no land sang before;
And let the pæans soar
And ring from shore to shore,
A hundred thousand welcomes,
And a hundred thousand more;

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And let the cannons roar
The joy-stunned city o'er.
And let the steeples chime it
A hundred thousand welcomes,
And a hundred thousand more;
And let the people rhyme it
From neighbour's door to door,
From every man's heart's core,
A hundred thousand welcomes,
And a hundred thousand more."

This contribution, in twenty not long lines, of 900,000 (say nine hundred thousand) welcomes is handsome indeed; and shows that when our bard is inclined to be liberal, he does not look to the cost. But what is a sum of 900,000 to his further proposal?—

"O let all these declare it,
Let miles of shouting swear it,
In all the years of yore,
Unparalleled before!
And thou, most welcome Wand'rer
Across the Northern Water,
Our England's ALEXANDRA,
Our dear adopted daughter—
Lay to thine heart, conned o'er and o'er,
In future years remembered well,
The magic fervour of this spell
That shakes the land from shore to shore,
And makes all hearts and eyes brim o'er;
Our hundred thousand welcomes,
Our fifty million welcomes,
And a hundred million more!"

Here we have, besides the most liberal previous subscription, a further call on the public for no less than one hundred and fifty million one hundred thousand welcomes for her Royal Highness. How much is this per head for all of us in the three kingdoms? Not above five welcomes apiece, and I am sure many of us have given more than five hurrahs to the fair young Princess.

Each man sings according to his voice, and gives in proportion to his means. The guns at Sheerness "from their adamantine lips" (which had spoken in quarrelsome old times a very different language) roared a hundred thundering welcomes to the fair Dane. The maidens of England strewed roses before her feet at Gravesend when she landed. Mr. Tupper, with the million and odd welcomes, may be compared to the thundering fleet; Mr. Chorley's song,

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to the flowerets scattered on her Royal Highness's happy and carpeted path :—

"Blessings on that fair face!
Safe on the shore
Of her home-dwelling place,
Stranger no more.
Love, from her household shrine,
Keep sorrow far!
May for her hawthorn twine,
June bring sweet eglantine,
Autumn, the golden vine,
Dear Northern Star!"

Hawthorn for May, eglantine for June, and in autumn a little tasse of the golden vine for our Northern Star. I am sure no one will grudge the Princess these simple enjoyments, and of the produce of the last-named pleasing plant, I wonder how many bumpers were drunk to her health on the happy day of her bridal? As for the Laureate's verses, I would respectfully liken his Highness to a giant showing a beacon torch on "a windy headland." His flaring torch is a pine-tree, to be sure, which nobody can wield but himself. He waves it: and four times in the midnight he shouts mightily, "Alexandra!" and the Pontic pine is whirled into the ocean, and Enceladus goes home.

Whose muse, whose cornemuse, sounds with such plaintive sweetness from Arthur's Seat, while Edinburgh and Musselburgh lie rapt in delight, and the mermaids come flapping up to Leith shore to hear the exquisite music? Sweeter piper Edina knows not than Aytoun, the Bard of the Cavaliers, who has given in his frank adhesion to the reigning dynasty. When a most beautiful, celebrated and unfortunate princess whose memory the Professor loves—when Mary, wife of Francis the Second, King of France, and by her own right proclaimed Queen of Scotland and England (poor soul!), entered Paris with her young bridegroom, good Peter Ronsard wrote of her—

"Toi qui as veu l'excellence de celle
Qui rend le ciel de l'Escosse envieux,
Dy hardiment, contentez vous mes yeux,
Vous ne verrez jamais chose plus belle."*

"Vous ne verrez jamais chose plus belle." Here is an Alexandrine written three hundred years ago, as simple as *bon jour*. Professor Aytoun is more ornate. After elegantly complimenting the spring, and a description of her Royal Highness's well-known ancestors the "Berserkers," he bursts forth—

* Quoted in Mignet's "Life of Mary."

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"The Rose of Denmark comes, the Royal Bride!
O loveliest Rose! our paragon and pride—
Choice of the Prince whom England holds so dear—
What homage shall we pay
To one who has no peer?
What can the bard or wildered minstrel say
More than the peasant who on bended knee
Breathes from his heart an earnest prayer for thee?
Words are not fair, if that they would express
Is fairer still; so lovers in dismay
Stand all abashed before that loveliness
They worship most, but find no words to pray.
Too sweet for incense! (*bravo!*) Take our loves instead—
Most freely, truly, and devoutly given;
Our power for blessings on that gentle head,
For earthly happiness and rest in heaven!
May never sorrow dim those dovelike eyes,
But peace as pure as reigned in Paradise,
Calm and untainted on creation's eve,
Attend thee still! May holy angels," &c.

This is all very well, my dear country cousins. But will you say "Amen" to this prayer? I won't. Assuredly our fair Princess will shed many tears out of the "dovelike eyes," or the heart will be little worth. Is she to know no parting, no care, no anxious longing, no tender watches by the sick, to deplore no friends and kindred, and feel no grief? Heaven forbid! When a bard or wildered minstrel writes so, best accept his own confession, that he is losing his head. On the day of her entrance into London who looked more bright and happy than the Princess? On the day of the marriage, the fair face wore its marks of care already, and looked out quite grave, and frightened almost, under the wreaths and lace and orange-flowers. Would you have had her feel no tremor? A maiden on the bridegroom's threshold, a Princess led up to the steps of a throne? I think her pallor and doubt became her as well as her smiles. That, I can tell you, was *our* vote who sate in X compartment, let us say, in the nave of Saint George's Chapel at Windsor, and saw a part of one of the brightest ceremonies ever performed there.

My dear cousin Mary, you have an account of the dresses; and I promise you there were princesses besides the bride whom it did the eyes good to behold. Around the bride sailed a bevy of young creatures so fair, white, and graceful that I thought of those fairy-tale beauties who are sometimes princesses, and sometimes white swans. The Royal Princesses and the Royal Knights of the Garter swept by, in prodigious robes and trains of purple velvet—thirty shillings a yard, my dear, not of course including the lining, which,

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I have no doubt, was of the richest satin, or that costly "miniver" which we used to read about in poor Jerrold's writings. The young Princes were habited in kilts; and by the side of the Princess Royal trotted such a little wee solemn Highlander! He is the young heir and chief of the famous clan of Brandenburg. His eyrie is amongst the Eagles, and I pray no harm may befall the dear little chieftain.

The heralds in their tabards were marvellous to behold, and a nod from Rouge Croix gave me the keenest gratification. I tried to catch Garter's eye, but either I couldn't or he wouldn't. In his robes, he is like one of the Three Kings in old missal illuminations. Goldstick in waiting is even more splendid. With his gold rod and robes and trappings of many colours, he looks like a Royal enchanter, and as if he had raised up all this scene of glamour by a wave of his glittering wand. The silver trumpeters wear such quaint caps, and behind the trumpeters came a drum-bearer, on whose back a gold laced drummer drubbed his march.

When the silver clarions had blown, and under a clear chorus of white-robed children chanting round the organ, the noble procession passed into the chapel, and was hidden from our sight for a while, there was silence, or from the inner chapel ever so faint a hum. Then hymns arose, and in the lull we knew that prayers were being said, and the sacred rite performed which joined Albert Edward to Alexandra his wife. I am sure hearty prayers were offered outside the gate as well as within for that princely young pair, and for their Mother and Queen. The peace, the freedom, the happiness, the order which her rule guarantees, are part of my birthright as an Englishman, and I bless God for my share. Where else shall I find such liberty of action, thought, speech, or laws which protect me so well? Her part of her compact with her people, what sovereign ever better performed? If ours sits apart from the festivities of the day, it is because she suffers from a grief so recent that the loyal heart cannot master it as yet, and remains *treu und fest* to a beloved memory. A part of the music which celebrates the day's service was composed by the husband who is gone to the place where the just and pure of life meet the reward promised by the Father of all of us to good and faithful servants who have done well here below. As this one gives in his account, surely we may remember how the Prince was the friend of all peaceful arts and learning; how he was true and fast always to duty, home, honour; how, through a life of complicated trials, he was sagacious, righteous, active and self-denying. And as we trace in the young faces of his many children the father's features and likeness, what Englishman will not pray that they

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may have inherited also some of the great qualities which won for the Prince Consort the love and respect of our country?

The papers tell us how, on the night of the marriage of the Prince of Wales, all over England and Scotland illuminations were made, the poor and children were feasted, and in village and city thousands of kindly schemes were devised to mark the national happiness and sympathy. "The bonfire on Coptpoint at Folkestone was seen in France," the *Telegraph* says, "more clearly than even the French marine lights could be seen at Folkestone." Long may the fire continue to burn! There are European coasts (and inland places) where the liberty light has been extinguished, or is so low that you can't see to read by it—there are great Atlantic shores where it flickers and smokes very gloomily. Let us be thankful to the honest guardians of ours, and for the kind sky under which it burns bright and steady.

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ON A MEDAL OF GEORGE THE FOURTH

BEFORE me lies a coin bearing the image and superscription of King George the Fourth, and of the nominal value of two-and-sixpence. But an official friend at a neighbouring turnpike says the piece is hopelessly bad; and a chemist tested it, returning a like unfavourable opinion. A cabman, who had brought me from a Club, left it with the Club porter, appealing to the gent who gave it a pore cabby, at ever so much o'clock of a rainy night, which he hoped he would give him another. I have taken that cabman at his word. He has been provided with a sound coin. The bad piece is on the table before me, and shall have a hole drilled through it, as soon as this essay is written, by a loyal subject who does not desire to deface the Sovereign's image, but to protest against the rascal who has taken his name in vain. *Fid. Def.* indeed! Is this what you call defending the faith? You dare to forge your Sovereign's name, and pass your scoundrel pewter as his silver? I wonder who you are, wretch and most consummate trickster? This forgery is so complete that even now I am deceived by it—I can't see the difference between the base and sterling metal. Perhaps this piece is a little lighter;—I don't know. A little softer:—is it? I have not bitten it, not being a connoisseur in the tasting of pewter or silver. I take the word of three honest men, though it goes against me; and though I have given two-and-sixpence worth of honest consideration for the counter, I shall not attempt to implicate anybody else in my misfortune, or transfer my ill-luck to a deluded neighbour.

I say the imitation is so curiously successful, the stamping, milling of the edges, lettering, and so forth, are so neat, that even now, when my eyes are open, I cannot see the cheat. How did those experts, the cabman, and pikeman, and tradesman, come to find it out? How do they happen to be more familiar with pewter and silver than I am? You see, I put out of the question another point which I might argue without fear of defeat, namely, the cabman's statement that I gave him this bad piece of money. Suppose every cabman who took a shilling fare were to drive away

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and return presently with a bad coin and an assertion that I had given it to him! This would be absurd and mischievous; an encouragement of vice amongst men who already are subject to temptations. Being *homo*, I think if I were a cabman myself, I might sometimes stretch a furlong or two in my calculation of distance. But don't come *twice*, my man, and tell me I have given you a bad half-crown. No, no! I have paid once like a gentleman, and once is enough. For instance, during the Exhibition time I was stopped by an old countrywoman in black, with a huge umbrella, who, bursting into tears, said to me, "Master, be this the way to Harlow, in Essex?" "This the way to Harlow? This is the way to Exeter, my good lady, and you will arrive there if you walk about 170 miles in your present direction," I answered courteously, replying to the old creature. Then she fell a-sobbing as though her old heart would break. She had a daughter a-dying at Harlow. She had walked already "vifty-dree mile that day." Tears stopped the rest of her discourse, so artless, genuine, and abundant that—I own the truth—I gave her, in I believe genuine silver, a piece of the exact size of that coin which forms the subject of this essay. Well. About a month since, near to the very spot where I had met my old woman, I was accosted by a person in black, a person in a large draggled cap, a person with a huge umbrella, who was beginning, "I say, Master, can you tell me if this be the way to Har——" but here she stopped. Her eyes goggled wildly. She started from me, as Macbeth turned from Macduff. She would not engage with me. It was my old friend of Harlow, in Essex. I daresay she has informed many other people of her daughter's illness, and her anxiety to be put upon the right way to Harlow. Not long since a very gentlemanlike man, Major Delamere let us call him (I like the title of Major very much), requested to see me, named a dead gentleman who he said had been our mutual friend, and on the strength of this mutual acquaintance, begged me to cash his cheque for five pounds!

It is these things, my dear sir, which serve to make a man cynical. I do conscientiously believe that had I cashed the Major's cheque there would have been a difficulty about payment on the part of the respected bankers on whom he drew. On your honour and conscience, do you think that old widow who was walking from Tunbridge Wells to Harlow had a daughter ill, and was an honest woman at all? The daughter couldn't always, you see, be being ill, and her mother on her way to her dear child through Hyde Park. In the same way some habitual sneerers may be inclined to hint that the cabman's story was an invention—or at any rate, choose to ride off (so to speak) on the doubt. No. My opinion,

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I own, is unfavourable as regards the widow from Tunbridge Wells, and Major Delamere; but, believing the cabman was honest, I am glad to think he was not injured by the reader's most humble servant.

What a queer exciting life this rogue's march must be: this attempt of the bad half-crowns to get into circulation! Had my distinguished friend the Major knocked at many doors that morning before operating on mine? The sport must be something akin to the pleasure of tiger or elephant hunting. What ingenuity the sportsman must have in tracing his prey—what daring and caution in coming upon him! What coolness in facing the angry animal (for, after all, a man on whom you draw a cheque *à bout portant* will be angry). What a delicious thrill of triumph, if you can bring him down! If I have money at the banker's, and draw for a portion of it over the counter, that is mere prose—any dolt can do that. But, having no balance, say I drive up in a cab, present a cheque at Coutts's, and, receiving the amount, drive off? What a glorious morning's sport that has been! How superior in excitement to the common transactions of every-day life! . . . I must tell a story; it is against myself, I know, but it *will* out, and perhaps my mind will be the easier.

More than twenty years ago, in an island remarkable for its verdure, I met four or five times one of the most agreeable companions with whom I have passed a night. I heard that evil times had come upon this gentleman; and, overtaking him in a road near my own house one evening, I asked him to come home to dinner. In two days he was at my door again. At breakfast-time was this second appearance. He was in a cab (of course he was in a cab; they always are, these unfortunate, these courageous men). To deny myself was absurd. My friend could see me over the parlour blinds, surrounded by my family, and cheerfully partaking of the morning meal. Might he have a word with me? and can you imagine its purport? By the most provoking delay, his uncle the admiral not being able to come to town till Friday—would I cash him a cheque? I need not say it would be paid on Saturday without fail. I tell you that man went away with money in his pocket, and I regret to add that his gallant relative has not *come to town yet!*

Laying down the pen, and sinking back in my chair, here, perhaps, I fall into a five minutes' reverie, and think of one, two, three, half-a-dozen cases in which I have been content to accept that sham promissory coin in return for sterling money advanced. Not a reader, whatever his age, but could tell a like story. I vow and believe there are men of fifty, who will dine well to-day, who have

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not paid their school debts yet, and who have not taken up their long-protested promises to pay. Tom, Dick, Harry, my boys, I owe you no grudge, and rather relish that wince with which you will read these meek lines and say, "He means me." Poor Jack in Hades! Do you remember a certain pecuniary transaction, and a little sum of money you borrowed "until the meeting of Parliament"? Parliament met often in your lifetime: Parliament has met since: but I think I should scarce be more surprised if your ghost glided into the room now, and laid down the amount of our little account, than I should have been if you had paid me in your lifetime with the actual acceptances of the Bank of England. You asked to borrow, but you never intended to pay. I would as soon have believed that a promissory note of Sir John Falstaff (accepted by Messrs. Bardolph and Nym, and payable in Aldgate), would be as sure to find payment, as that note of the departed—nay, lamented —Jack Thriftless.

He who borrows, meaning to pay, is quite a different person from the individual here described. Many—most, I hope—took Jack's promise for what it was worth—and quite well knew that when he said, "Lend me," he meant, "Give me" twenty pounds. "Give me change for this half-crown," said Jack; "I know it's a pewter piece;" and you gave him the change in honest silver, and pocketed the counterfeit gravely.

What a queer consciousness that must be which accompanies such a man in his sleeping, in his waking, in his walk through life, by his fireside with his children round him. "For what we are going to receive," &c.—he says grace before his dinner. "My dears! Shall I help you to some mutton? I robbed the butcher of the meat. I don't intend to pay him. Johnson, my boy, a glass of champagne? Very good, isn't it? Not too sweet. Forty-six. I get it from So-and-so, whom I intend to cheat." As eagles go forth and bring home to their eaglets the lamb or the pavid kid, I say there are men who live and victual their nests by plunder. We all know highway robbers in white neckcloths, domestic bandits, marauders, passers of bad coin. What was yonder cheque which Major Delamere proposed I should cash but a piece of bad money? What was Jack Thriftless's promise to pay? Having got his booty, I fancy Jack or the Major returning home, and wife and children gathering round about him. Poor wife and children! They respect papa very likely. They don't know he is false coin. Maybe the wife has a dreadful inkling of the truth, and, sickening, tries to hide it from the daughters and sons. Maybe she is an accomplice: herself a brazen forgery. If Turpin and Jack Sheppard were married, very likely Mesdames Sheppard and Turpin did not know, at first,

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what their husbands' real profession was, and fancied, when the men left home in the morning, they only went away to follow some regular and honourable business. Then a suspicion of the truth may have come: then a dreadful revelation; and presently we have the guilty pair robbing together, or passing forged money each on his own account. You know Doctor Dodd? I wonder whether his wife knows that he is a forger and scoundrel? Has she had any of the plunder, think you, and were the darling children's new dresses bought with it? The Doctor's sermon last Sunday was certainly charming, and we all cried. Ah, my poor Dodd! Whilst he is preaching most beautifully, pocket-handkerchief in hand, he is peering over the pulpit cushions, looking out piteously for Messrs. Peachum and Lockit from the police-office. By Doctor Dodd you understand I would typify the rogue of respectable exterior, not committed to gaol yet, but not undiscovered. We all know one or two such. This very sermon perhaps will be read by some, or more likely—for depend upon it, your solemn hypocrite scoundrels don't care much for light literature—more likely, I say, this discourse will be read by some of their wives, who think, "Ah, mercy! does that horrible cynical wretch know how my poor husband blacked my eye, or abstracted mamma's silver teapot, or forced me to write So-and-so's name on that piece of stamped paper, or what not?" My good creature, I am not angry with *you*. If your husband has broken your nose, you will vow that he had authority over your person, and a right to demolish any part of it: if he has conveyed away your mamma's teapot, you will say that she gave it to him at your marriage, and it was very ugly, and what not? if he takes your aunt's watch, and you love him, you will carry it ere long to the pawnbroker's, and perjure yourself—oh, how you will perjure yourself—in the witness-box! I know this is a degrading view of woman's noble nature, her exalted mission, and so forth, and so forth. I know you will say this is bad morality. Is it? Do you, or do you not, expect your womankind to stick by you for better or for worse? Say I have committed a forgery, and the officers come in search of me, is my wife, Mrs. Dodd, to show them into the dining-room and say, "Pray step in, gentlemen! My husband has just come home from church. That bill with my Lord Chesterfield's acceptance, I am bound to own, was never written by his Lordship, and the signature is in the Doctor's handwriting." I say, would any man of sense or honour, or fine feeling, praise his wife for telling the truth under such circumstances? Suppose she made a fine grimace, and said, "Most painful as my position is, most deeply as I feel for my William, yet truth must prevail, and I deeply lament to state that the beloved partner of my life *did*

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commit the flagitious act with which he is charged, and is at this present moment located in the two-pair back, up the chimney, whither it is my duty to lead you." Why, even Dodd himself, who was one of the greatest humbugs who ever lived, would not have had the face to say that he approved of his wife telling the truth in such a case. Would you have had Flora Macdonald beckon the officers, saying, "This way, gentlemen! You will find the Young Chevalier asleep in that cavern." Or don't you prefer her to be *splendide mendax*, and ready at all risks to save him? If ever I lead a rebellion, and my women betray me, may I be hanged but I will not forgive them: and if ever I steal a teapot, and *my* women don't stand up for me, pass the article under their shawls, whisk down the street with it, outbluster the policeman, and utter any amount of fibs before Mr. Beak, those beings are not what I take them to be, and—for a fortune—I won't give them so much as a bad half-crown.

Is conscious guilt a source of unmixed pain to the bosom which harbours it? Has not your criminal, on the contrary, an excitement, an enjoyment within quite unknown to you and me who never did anything wrong in our lives? The housebreaker must snatch a fearful joy as he walks unchallenged by the policeman with his sack full of spoons and tankards. Do not cracksmen, when assembled together, entertain themselves with stories of glorious old burglaries which they or bygone heroes have committed? But that my age is mature and my habits formed, I should really just like to try a little criminality. Fancy passing a forged bill to your banker; calling on a friend and sweeping his sideboard of plate, his hall of umbrellas and coats; and then going home to dress for dinner, say—and to meet a bishop, a judge, and a police magistrate or so, and talk more morally than any man at table! How I should chuckle (as my host's spoons clinked softly in my pocket) whilst I was uttering some noble speech about virtue, duty, charity! I wonder do we meet garotters in society? In an average tea-party, now, how many returned convicts are there? Does John Footman, when he asks permission to go and spend the evening with some friends, pass his time in thuggee; waylay and strangle an old gentleman or two; let himself into your house, with the house-key of course, and appear as usual with the shaving-water when you ring your bell in the morning? The very possibility of such a suspicion invests John with a new and romantic interest in my mind. Behind the grave politeness of his countenance I try and read the lurking treason. Full of this pleasing subject, I have been talking thief-stories with a neighbour. The neighbour tells me how some friends of hers used to keep a jewel-box under a bed

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in their room; and, going into the room, they thought they heard a noise under the bed. They had the courage to look. The cook was under the bed—under the bed with the jewel-box. Of course she said she had come for purposes connected with her business; but this was absurd. A cook under a bed is not there for professional purposes. A relation of mine had a box containing diamonds under her bed, which diamonds she told me were to be mine. Mine! One day, at dinner-time, between the entrées and the roast, a cab drove away from my relative's house containing the box wherein lay the diamonds. John laid the dessert, brought the coffee, waited all the evening—and oh, how frightened he was when he came to learn that his mistress's box had been conveyed out of her own room, and it contained diamonds—"Law bless us, did it now?" I wonder whether John's subsequent career has been prosperous? Perhaps the gentlemen from Bow Street were all in the wrong when they agreed in suspecting John as the author of the robbery. His noble nature was hurt at the suspicion. You conceive he would not like to remain in a family where they were mean enough to suspect him of stealing a jewel-box out of a bedroom—and the injured man and my relatives soon parted. But, inclining (with my usual cynicism) to think that he did steal the valuables, think of his life for the month or two whilst he still remains in the service! He shows the officers over the house, agrees with them that the *coup* must have been made by persons familiar with it; gives them every assistance; pities his master and mistress with a manly compassion; points out what a cruel misfortune it is to himself as an honest man, with his living to get and his family to provide for, that this suspicion should fall on him. Finally, he takes leave of his place, with a deep though natural melancholy that he had ever accepted it. What's a thousand pounds to gentlefolks? A loss certainly, but they will live as well without the diamonds as with them. But to John his Hhhonour was worth more than diamonds, his Hhonour was. Whohever is to give him back his character? Who is to prevent hanyone from saying, "Ho yes. This is the footman which was in the family where the diamonds was stole"? &c.

I wonder has John prospered in life subsequently? If he is innocent, he does not interest me in the least. The interest of the case lies in John's behaviour supposing him to be guilty. Imagine the smiling face, the daily service, the orderly performance of duty, whilst within John is suffering pangs lest discovery should overtake him. Every bell of the door which he is obliged to open may bring a police-officer. The accomplices may peach. What an exciting life John's must have been for a while. And now, years and years

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after, when pursuit has long ceased, and detection is impossible, does he ever revert to the little transaction? Is it possible those diamonds cost a thousand pounds? What a rogue the fence must have been who only gave him so and so! And I pleasingly picture to myself an old ex-footman and an ancient receiver of stolen goods meeting and talking over this matter, which dates from times so early that her present Majesty's fair image could only just have begun to be coined or forged.

I choose to take John at the time when his little peccadillo is suspected, perhaps, but when there is no specific charge of robbery against him. He is not yet convicted: he is not even on his trial; how then can we venture to say he is guilty? Now think what scores of men and women walk the world in a like predicament; and what false coin passes current! Pinchbeck strives to pass off his history as sound coin. He knows it is only base metal, washed over with a thin varnish of learning. Poluphloisbos puts his sermons in circulation: sounding brass, lacquered over with white metal, and marked with the stamp and image of piety. What say you to Drawcansir's reputation as a military commander? to Tibbs's pretensions to be a fine gentleman? to Sapphira's claims as a poetess, or Rodoessa's as a beauty? His bravery, his piety, high birth, genius, beauty—each of these deceivers would palm his falsehood on us, and have us accept his forgeries as sterling coin. And we talk here, please to observe, of weaknesses rather than crimes. Some of us have more serious things to hide than a yellow cheek behind a raddle of rouge, or a white poll under a wig of jetty curls. You know, neighbour, there are not only false teeth in this world, but false tongues: and some make up a bust and an appearance of strength with padding, cotton, and what not? while another kind of artist tries to take you in by wearing under his waistcoat, and perpetually thumping, an immense sham heart. Dear sir, may yours and mine be found, at the right time, of the proper size and in the right place.

And what has this to do with half-crowns, good or bad? Ah, friend! may our coin, battered, and clipped, and defaced though it be, be proved to be Sterling Silver on the day of the Great Assay!

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"STRANGE TO SAY, ON CLUB PAPER"

BEFORE the Duke of York's column, and between the "Athenæum" and "United Service" Clubs, I have seen more than once, on the esplanade, a preacher holding forth to a little congregation of *badauds* and street-boys, whom he entertains with a discourse on the crimes of a rapacious aristocracy, or warns of the imminent peril of their own souls. Sometimes this orator is made to "move on" by brutal policemen. Sometimes, on a Sunday, he points to a white head or two visible in the windows of the Clubs to the right and left of him, and volunteers a statement that those quiet and elderly Sabbath-breakers will very soon be called from this world to another, where their lot will by no means be so comfortable as that which the reprobates enjoy here, in their arm-chairs by their snug fires.

At the end of last month, had I been a Pall Mall preacher, I would have liked to send a whip round to all the Clubs in St. James's, and convoke the few members remaining in London to hear a discourse *sub Dio* on a text from the *Observer* newspaper. I would have taken my post under the statue of Fame, say, where she stands distributing wreaths to the three Crimean Guardsmen. (The crossing-sweeper does not obstruct the path, and I suppose is away at his villa on Sundays.) And, when the congregation was pretty quiet, I would have begun :—

In the *Observer* of the 27th September 1863, in the fifth page and the fourth column, it is thus written :—

"The codicil appended to the will of the late Lord Clyde, executed at Chatham, and bearing the signature of Clyde, F.M., is written, strange to say, on a sheet of paper *bearing the 'Athenæum Club' mark.*"

What the codicil is, my dear brethren, it is not our business to inquire. It conveys a benefaction to a faithful and attached friend of the good Field-Marshal. The gift may be a lakh of rupees, or it may be a house and its contents—furniture, plate, and wine-cellar. My friends, I know the wine-merchant, and, for the sake of the legatee, hope heartily that the stock is large.

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Am I wrong, dear brethren, in supposing that you expect a preacher to say a seasonable word on death here? If you don't, I fear you are but little familiar with the habits of preachers, and are but lax hearers of sermons. We might contrast the vault where the warrior's remains lie shrouded and coffined, with that in which his worldly provision of wine is stowed away. Spain and Portugal and France—all the lands which supplied his store—as hardy and obedient subaltern, as resolute captain, as colonel daring but prudent—he has visited the fields of all. In India and China he marches always unconquered; or at the head of his dauntless Highland brigade he treads the Crimean snow; or he rides from conquest to conquest in India once more; succouring his countrymen in the hour of their utmost need; smiting down the scared mutiny, and trampling out the embers of rebellion; at the head of an heroic army, a consummate chief. And now his glorious old sword is sheathed, and his honours are won; and he has bought him a house, and stored it with modest cheer for his friends (the good old man put water in his own wine, and a glass or two sufficed him)—behold the end comes, and his legatee inherits these modest possessions by virtue of a codicil to his Lordship's will, written, "*strange to say, on a sheet of paper bearing the 'Athenæum Club' mark.*"

It is to this part of the text, my brethren, that I propose to address myself particularly, and if the remarks I make are offensive to any of you, you know the doors of our meeting-house are open, and you can walk out when you will. Around us are magnificent halls and palaces frequented by such a multitude of men as not even the Roman Forum assembled together. Yonder are the Martium and the Palladium. Next to the Palladium is the elegant Viatorium, which Barry gracefully stole from Rome. By its side is the massive Reformatorium: and the—the Ultratorium rears its granite columns beyond. Extending down the street palace after palace rises magnificent, and under their lofty roofs warriors and lawyers, merchants and nobles, scholars and seamen, the wealthy, the poor, the busy, the idle assemble. Into the halls built down this little street and its neighbourhood the principal men of all London come to hear or impart the news; and the affairs of the State or of private individuals, the quarrels of empires or of authors, the movements of the Court, or the splendid vagaries of fashion, the intrigues of statesmen or of persons of another sex yet more wily, the last news of battles in the great occidental continents, nay, the latest betting for the horse-races, or the advent of a dancer at the theatre—all that men do is discussed in these Pall Mall agoræ, where we of London daily assemble.

Now among so many talkers, consider how many false reports

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must fly about: in such multitudes imagine how many disappointed men there must be; how many chatterboxes; how many feeble and credulous (whereof I mark some specimens in my congregation); how many mean, rancorous, prone to believe ill of their betters, eager to find fault; and then, my brethren, fancy how the words of my text must have been read and received in Pall Mall! (I perceive several of the congregation looking most uncomfortable. One old boy with a dyed moustache turns purple in the face, and struts back to the Martium: another, with a shrug of the shoulder and a murmur of "Rubbish," slinks away in the direction of the Togatorium, and the preacher continues.) The will of Field-Marshal Lord Clyde—signed *at Chatham*, mind, where his Lordship died—is written, *strange to say*, on a sheet of paper bearing the "Athenæum Club" mark!

The inference is obvious. A man cannot get Athenæum paper except at the "Athenæum." Such paper is not sold at Chatham, where the last codicil to his Lordship's will is dated. And so the painful belief is forced upon us, that a Peer, a Field-Marshal, wealthy, respected, illustrious, could pocket paper at his Club, and carry it away with him to the country. One fancies the hall-porter conscious of the old lord's iniquity, and holding down his head as the Marshal passes the door. What is that roll which his Lordship carries? Is it his Marshal's bâton gloriously won? No; it is a roll of foolscap conveyed from the Club. What has he on his breast, under his great-coat? Is it his Star of India? No; it is a bundle of envelopes, bearing the head of Minerva, some sealing-wax, and a half-score of pens.

Let us imagine how in the hall of one or other of these Clubs this strange anecdote will be discussed.

"Notorious screw," says Sneer. "The poor old fellow's avarice has long been known."

"Suppose he wishes to imitate the Duke of Marlborough," says Simper.

"Habit of looting contracted in India, you know; ain't so easy to get over, you know," says Snigger.

"When officers dined with him in India," remarks Solemn, "it was notorious that the spoons were all of a different pattern."

"Perhaps it isn't true. Suppose he wrote his paper at the Club?" interposes Jones.

"It is dated at Chatham, my good man," says Brown. "A man if he is in London says he is in London. A man if he is in Rochester says he is in Rochester. This man happens to forget that he is using the Club paper: and he happens to be found out: many men *don't* happen to be found out. I've seen literary fellows

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at Clubs writing their rubbishing articles; I have no doubt they take away reams of paper. They crib thoughts: why shouldn't they crib stationery? One of your literary vagabonds who is capable of stabbing a reputation, who is capable of telling any monstrous falsehood to support his party, is surely capable of stealing a ream of paper."

"Well, well, we have all our weaknesses," sighs Robinson. "Seen that article, Thompson, in the *Observer* about Lord Clyde and the Club paper? You'll find it upstairs. In the third column of the fifth page towards the bottom of the page. I suppose he was so poor he couldn't afford to buy a quire of paper. Hadn't fourpence in the world. Oh, no!"

"And they want to get up a testimonial to this man's memory —a statue or something!" cries Jawkins. "A man who wallows in wealth and takes paper away from his Club! I don't say he is not brave. Brutal courage most men have. I don't say he was not a good officer: a man with such experience *must* have been a good officer, unless he was a born fool. But to think of this man loaded with honours—though of a low origin—so lost to self-respect as actually to take away the 'Athenæum' paper! These parvenus, sir, betray their origin—betray their origin. I said to my wife this very morning, 'Mrs. Jawkins,' I said, 'there is talk of a testimonial to this man. I will not give one shilling. I have no idea of raising statues to fellows who take away Club paper. No, by George! I have not. Why, they will be raising statues to men who take Club spoons next! Not one penny of *my* money shall they have!'"

And now, if you please, we will tell the real story which has furnished this scandal to a newspaper, this tattle to Club gossips and loungers. The Field-Marshal, wishing to make a further provision for a friend, informed his lawyer what he desired to do. The lawyer, a member of the "Athenæum Club," there wrote the draft of such a codicil as he would advise, and sent the paper by the post to Lord Clyde at Chatham. Lord Clyde, finding the paper perfectly satisfactory, signed it and sent it back: and hence we have the story of "the codicil bearing the signature of Clyde, F.M., and written, strange to say, upon paper bearing the 'Athenæum Club' mark."

Here I have been imagining a dialogue between a half-dozen gossips such as congregate round a Club fireplace of an afternoon. I wonder how many people besides—whether any chance reader of this very page has read and believed this story about the good old lord? Have the country papers copied the anecdote, and our "own correspondents" made their remarks on it? If, my good sir, or

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madam, you have read it and credited it, don't you own to a little feeling of shame and sorrow, now that the trumpery little mystery is cleared? To "the new inhabitant of light," passed away and out of reach of our censure, misrepresentation, scandal, dulness, malice, a silly falsehood matters nothing. Censure and praise are alike to him—

> "The music warbling to the deafened ear,
> The incense wasted on the funeral bier,"

the pompous eulogy pronounced over the gravestone, or the lie that slander spits on it. Faithfully though this brave old chief did his duty, honest and upright though his life was, glorious his renown—you see he could write at Chatham on London paper; you see men can be found to point out how "strange" his behaviour was.

And about ourselves? My good people, do you by chance know any man or woman who has formed unjust conclusions regarding his neighbour? Have you ever found yourself willing, nay, eager to believe evil of some man whom you hate? Whom you hate because he is successful, and you are not: because he is rich, and you are poor: because he dines with great men who don't invite you: because he wears a silk gown, and yours is still stuff: because he has been called in to perform the operation, though you lived close by: because his pictures have been bought, and yours returned home unsold: because he fills his church, and you are preaching to empty pews? If your rival prospers, have you ever felt a twinge of anger? If his wife's carriage passes you and Mrs. Tomkins, who are in a cab, don't you feel that those people are giving themselves absurd airs of importance? If he lives with great people, are you not sure he is a sneak? And if you ever felt envy towards another, and if your heart has ever been black towards your brother, if you have been peevish at his success, pleased to hear his merit depreciated, and eager to believe all that is said in his disfavour—my good sir, as you yourself contritely own that you are unjust, jealous, uncharitable, so, you may be sure, some men are uncharitable, jealous, and unjust regarding *you*.

The proofs and manuscript of this little sermon have just come from the printer's, and as I look at the writing, I perceive, not without a smile, that one or two of the pages bear, "strange to say," the mark of a Club of which I have the honour to be a member. Those lines quoted above are from some noble verses written by one of Mr. Addison's men, Mr. Tickell, on the death of Cadogan, who was amongst the most prominent "of Marlborough's captains and Eugenio's friends." If you are acquainted

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with the history of those times, you have read how Cadogan had his feuds and hatreds too, as Tickell's patron had his, as Cadogan's great chief had his. "The Duke of Marlborough's character has been so variously drawn" (writes a famous contemporary of the Duke's), "that it is hard to pronounce on either side without the suspicion of flattery or detraction. I shall say nothing of his military accomplishments, which the opposite reports of his friends and enemies among the soldiers have rendered problematical. Those maligners who deny him personal valour, seem not to consider that this accusation is charged at a venture, since the person of a general is too seldom exposed, and that fear which is said sometimes to have disconcerted him before action might probably be more for his army than himself." If Swift could hint a doubt of Marlborough's courage, what wonder that a nameless scribe of our day should question the honour of Clyde?

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DENIS DUVAL

CHAPTER I

THE FAMILY TREE

TO plague my wife, who does not understand pleasantries in the matter of pedigree, I once drew a fine family tree of my ancestors, with Claude Duval, captain and highwayman, *sus. per coll.* in the reign of Charles II., dangling from a top branch. But this is only my joke with her High Mightiness my wife, and his Serene Highness my son. None of us Duvals have been *suspercollated* to my knowledge. As a boy, I have tasted a rope's end often enough, but not round my neck; and the persecutions endured by my ancestors in France for our Protestant religion, which we early received and steadily maintained, did not bring death upon us, as upon many of our faith, but only fines and poverty, and exile from our native country. The world knows how the bigotry of Louis XIV. drove many families out of France into England, who have become trusty and loyal subjects of the British Crown. Among the thousand fugitives were my grandfather and his wife. They settled at Winchelsea, in Sussex, where there has been a French church ever since Queen Bess's time and the dreadful day of Saint Bartholomew. Three miles off, at Rye, is another colony and church of our people: another *fester Burg*, where, under Britannia's sheltering buckler, we have been free to exercise our fathers' worship, and sing the songs of our Zion.

My grandfather was elder and precentor of the Church of Winchelsea, the pastor being Monsieur Denis, father of Rear-Admiral Sir Peter Denis, Baronet, my kind and best patron. He sailed with Anson in the famous *Centurion*, and obtained his first promotion through that great seaman: and of course you will all remember that it was Captain Denis who brought our good Queen Charlotte to England (7th September 1761), after a stormy passage of nine days, from Stade. As a child I was taken to his

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house in Great Ormond Street, Queen Square, London, and also to the Admiral's country-seat, Valence, near Westerham, in Kent, where Colonel Wolfe lived, father of the famous General James Wolfe, the glorious conqueror of Quebec.*

My father, who was of a wandering disposition, happened to be at Dover in the year 1761, when the Commissioners passed through, who were on their way to sign the treaty of peace, known as the Peace of Paris. He had parted, after some hot words, I believe, from his mother, who was, like himself, of a quick temper, and he was on the look-out for employment when Fate threw these gentlemen in his way. Mr. Duval spoke English, French, and German, his parents being of Alsace, and Mr. —— having need of a confidential person to attend him, who was master of the languages my father offered himself, and was accepted mainly through the good offices of Captain Denis, our patron, whose ship was then in the Downs. Being at Paris, father must needs visit Alsace, our native country, and having scarce one guinea to rub against another, of course chose to fall in love with my mother and marry her out of hand. *Monsieur mon père*, I fear, was but a prodigal; but he was his parents' only living child, and when he came home to Winchelsea, hungry and penniless, with a wife on his hand, they killed their fattest calf, and took both wanderers in. A short while after her marriage, my mother inherited some property from her parents in France, and most tenderly nursed my grandmother through a long illness, in which the good lady died. Of these matters I knew nothing personally, being at the time a child two or three years old; crying and sleeping, drinking and eating, growing, and having my infantile ailments, like other little darlings.

A violent woman was my mother, jealous, hot, and domineering, but generous and knowing how to forgive. I fancy my papa gave her too many opportunities of exercising this virtue, for, during his brief life, he was ever in scrapes and trouble. He met with an accident when fishing off the French coast, and was brought home and died, and was buried at Winchelsea: but the cause of his death I never knew until my good friend Sir Peter Denis told me in later years, when I had come to have troubles of my own.

I was born on the same day with his Royal Highness the Duke of York, viz. the 13th of August 1763, and used to be called the Bishop of Osnaburg by the boys in Winchelsea, where

* I remember a saying of G—— Aug st-s S-lw-n, Esquire, regarding the General, which has not been told, as far as I know, in the anecdotes. A Macaroni guardsman, speaking of Mr. Wolfe, was asked, "Was he a Jew? Wolfe was a Jewish name." "Certainly," says Mr. S-lw-n, "Mr. Wolfe was the *Height of Abraham*."

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between us French boys and the English boys I promise you there was many a good battle. Besides being *ancien* and precentor of the French church at Winchelsea, grandfather was a perruquier and barber by trade; and, if you must know it, I have curled and powdered a gentleman's head before this, and taken him by the nose and shaved him. I do not brag of having used lather and brush: but what is the use of disguising anything? *Tout se sçait*, as the French have it, and a great deal more too. There is Sir Humphrey Howard, who served with me second-lieutenant in the *Meleager*—he says he comes from the N—f—lk Howards; but his father was a shoemaker, and we always called him Humphrey Snob in the gunroom.

In France very few wealthy ladies are accustomed to nurse their children, and the little ones are put out to farmers' wives and healthy nurses, and perhaps better cared for than by their own meagre mothers. My mother's mother, an honest farmer's wife in Lorraine (for I am the first gentleman of my family, and chose my motto* of *Fecimus ipsi* not with pride, but with humble thanks for my good fortune), had brought up Mademoiselle Clarisse de Viomesnil, a Lorraine lady, between whom and her foster-sister there continued a tender friendship long after the marriage of both. Mother came to England, the wife of Monsieur mon papa; and Mademoiselle de Viomesnil married in her own country. She was of the Protestant branch of the Viomesnil family, and all the poorer in consequence of her parents' fidelity to their religion. Other members of the family were of the Catholic religion, and held in high esteem at Versailles.

Some short time after my mother's arrival in England, she heard that her dear foster-sister Clarisse was going to marry a Protestant gentleman of Lorraine, Vicomte de Barr, only son of M. le Comte de Saverne, a chamberlain to his Polish Majesty King Stanislas, father of the French Queen. M. de Saverne, on his son's marriage, gave up to the Vicomte de Barr his house at Saverne, and here for a while the newly-married couple lived. I do not say the young couple, for the Vicomte de Barr was five-and-twenty years older than his wife, who was but eighteen when her parents married her. As my mother's eyes were very weak, or, to say truth, she was not very skilful in reading, it used to be my lot as a boy to spell out my Lady Viscountess's letters to her *sœur de lait*, her good Ursule: and many a smart rap with the rolling-pin have I had over my noddle from Mother as I did my

* The Admiral insisted on taking or on a bend sable, three razors displayed proper, with the above motto. The family have adopted the mother's coat-of-arms.

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best to read. It was a word and a blow with Mother. She did not spare the rod and spoil the child, and that I suppose is the reason why I am so well grown—six feet two in my stockings, and fifteen stone four last Tuesday, when I was weighed along with our pig. Mem.—My neighbour's hams at Rose Cottage are the best in all Hampshire.

I was so young that I could not understand all I read. But I remember Mother used to growl in her rough way (she had a grenadier height and voice, and a pretty smart pair of black whiskers too)—my mother used to cry out, "She suffers—my Biche is unhappy—she has got a bad husband. He is a brute. All men are brutes." And with this she would glare at grandpapa, who was a very humble little man, and trembled before his *bru*, and obeyed her most obsequiously. Then Mother would vow she would go home, she would go and succour her Biche; but who would take care of these two imbeciles? meaning me and my grandpapa. Besides, Madame Duval was wanted at home. She dressed my ladies' heads, with very great taste, in the French way, and could shave, frizz, cut hair, and tie a queue along with the best barber in the country. Grandfather and the apprentice wove the wigs; when I was at home, I was too young for that work, and was taken off from it, and sent to a famous good school, Pocock's grammar-school at Rye, where I learned to speak English like a Briton born as I am, and not as we did at home, where we used a queer Alsatian jargon of French and German. At Pocock's I got a little smattering of Latin, too, and plenty of fighting for the first month or two. I remember my patron coming to see me in uniform, blue and white laced with gold, silk stockings and white breeches, and two of his officers along with him. "Where is Denis Duval?" says he, peeping into our schoolroom, and all the boys looking round with wonder at the great gentleman. Master Denis Duval was standing on a bench at that very moment for punishment, for fighting, I suppose, with a black eye as big as an omelette. "Denis would do very well if he would keep his fist off other boys' noses," says the master; and the Captain gave me a seven-shilling piece, and I spent it all but twopence before the night was over, I remember. Whilst I was at Pocock's, I boarded with Mr. Rudge, a tradesman, who, besides being a grocer at Rye, was in the seafaring way, and part owner of a fishing-boat; and he took *some very queer fish* in his nets, as you shall hear soon. He was a chief man among the Wesleyans, and I attended his church with him, not paying much attention to those most serious and sacred things in my early years, when I was a thoughtless boy, caring for nothing but lollipops, hoops, and marbles.

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Captain Denis was a very pleasant lively gentleman, and on this day he asked the master, Mr. Coates, what was the Latin for a holiday, and hoped Mr. C. would give one to his boys. Of course we sixty boys shouted yes to that proposal; and as for me, Captain Denis cried out, "Mr. Coates, I *press* this fellow with the black eye here, and intend to take him to dine with me at the 'Star.'" You may be sure I skipped off my bench, and followed my patron. He and his two officers went to the "Star," and after dinner called for a crown bowl of punch, and though I would drink none of it, never having been able to bear the taste of rum or brandy, I was glad to come out and sit with the gentlemen, who seemed to be amused with my childish prattle. Captain Denis asked me what I learned, and I daresay I bragged of my little learning: in fact I remember talking in a pompous way about Corderius and Cornelius Nepos; and I have no doubt gave myself very grand airs. He asked whether I liked Mr. Rudge, the grocer with whom I boarded. I did not like him much, I said; but I hated Miss Rudge and Bevil the apprentice most because they were always—— here I stopped. "But there is no use in telling tales out of school," says I. "We don't do that at Pocock's, we don't."

And what was my mother going to make of me? I said I should like to be a sailor, but a gentleman sailor, and fight for King George. And if I did I would bring all my prize-money home to Agnes, that is, almost all of it—only keep a little of it for myself.

"And so you like the sea, and go out sometimes?" asks Mr. Denis.

Oh, yes, I went out fishing. Mr. Rudge had a half share of a boat along with grandfather, and I used to help to clean her, and was taught to steer her, with many a precious slap on the head if I got her in the wind; and they said I was a very good look-out. I could see well, and remember bluffs and headlands and so forth; and I mentioned several places, points of our coasts, ay, and the French coast too.

"And what do you fish for?" asks the Captain.

"Oh, sir, I'm not to say anything about that, Mr. Rudge says!" on which the gentlemen roared with laughter. *They* knew Master Rudge's game, though I in my innocence did not understand it.

"And so you won't have a drop of punch?" asks Captain Denis.

"No, sir, I made a vow I would not, when I saw Miss Rudge so queer."

"Miss Rudge is often queer, is she?"

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"Yes, the nasty pig! And she calls names, and slips downstairs, and knocks the cups and saucers about, and fights the apprentice, and—but I mustn't say anything more. I never tell tales, I don't!"

In this way I went on prattling with my patron and his friends, and they made me sing them a song in French, and a song in German, and they laughed and seemed amused at my antics and capers. Captain Denis walked home with me to our lodgings, and I told him how I liked Sunday the best day of the week—that is, every other Sunday—because I went away quite early, and walked three miles to mother and grandfather at Winchelsea, and saw Agnes.

And who, pray, was Agnes? To-day her name is Agnes Duval, and she sits at her work-table hard by. The lot of my life has been changed by knowing her. To win such a prize in life's lottery is given but to very very few. What I have done (of any worth) has been done in trying to deserve her. I might have remained, but for her, in my humble native lot, to be neither honest nor happy, but that my good angel yonder succoured me. All I have I owe to her: but I pay with all I have, and what creature can do more?

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CHAPTER II

THE HOUSE OF SAVERNE

MADEMOISELLE DE SAVERNE came from Alsace, where her family occupied a much higher rank than that held by the worthy Protestant elder from whom her humble servant is descended. Her mother was a Viomesnil, her father was of a noble Alsatian family, Counts of Barr and Saverne. The old Count de Saverne was alive, and a chamberlain in the Court of his Polish Majesty good King Stanislas at Nanci, when his son the Vicomte de Barr, a man already advanced in years, brought home his blooming young bride to that pretty little capital.

The Count de Saverne was a brisk and cheery old gentleman, as his son was gloomy and severe. The Count's hotel at Nanci was one of the gayest of the little Court. His Protestantism was by no means austere. He was even known to regret that there were no French convents for noble damsels of the Protestant confession, as there were across the Rhine, where his own two daughters might be bestowed out of the way. Mesdemoiselles de Saverne were ungainly in appearance, fierce and sour in temper, resembling, in these particulars, their brother Monsieur le Baron de Barr.

In his youth, Monsieur de Barr had served not without distinction, being engaged against Messieurs the English at Hastenbeck and Laufeldt, where he had shown both courage and capacity. His Protestantism prevented his promotion in the army. He left it, steadfast in his faith, but soured in his temper. He did not care for whist or music, like his easy old father. His appearance at the Count's little suppers was as cheerful as a death's-head at a feast. Monsieur de Barr only frequented these entertainments to give pleasure to his young wife, who pined and was wretched in the solitary family mansion of Saverne, where the Vicomte took up his residence when first married.

He was of an awful temper, and subject to storms of passion. Being a very conscientious man, he suffered extremely after one of these ebullitions of rage. Between his alternations of anger and remorse, his life was a sad one; his household trembled before him, and especially the poor little wife whom he had brought out of her

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quiet country village to be the victim of his rage and repentances. More than once she fled to the old Count of Saverne at Nanci, and the kindly selfish old gentleman used his feeble endeavours to protect his poor little daughter-in-law. Quickly after these quarrels letters would arrive, containing vows of the most abject repentance on the Baron's part. These matrimonial campaigns followed a regular course. First rose the outbreak of temper; then the lady's flight ensued to papa-in-law at Nanci; then came letters expressive of grief; then the repentant criminal himself arrived, whose anguish and cries of *mea culpa* were more insupportable than his outbreaks of rage. After a few years, Madame de Barr lived almost entirely with her father-in-law at Nanci, and was scarcely seen in her husband's gloomy mansion of Saverne.

For some years no child was born of this most unhappy union. Just when poor King Stanislas came by his lamentable death (being burned at his own fire), the old Count de Saverne died, and his son found that he inherited little more than his father's name and title of Saverne, the family estate being greatly impoverished by the late Count's extravagant and indolent habits, and much weighed down by the portions awarded to the Demoiselles de Saverne, the elderly sisters of the present elderly lord.

The town house at Nanci was shut up for a while; and the new Lord of Saverne retired to his castle with his sisters and his wife. With his Catholic neighbours the stern Protestant gentleman had little communion; and the society which frequented his dull house chiefly consisted of Protestant clergymen who came from the other side of the Rhine. Along its left bank, which had only become French territory of late years, the French and German languages were spoken indifferently; in the latter language Monsieur de Saverne was called the Herr von Zabern. After his father's death, Herr von Zabern may have melted a little, but he soon became as moody, violent, and ill-conditioned as ever the Herr von Barr had been. Saverne was a little country town, with the crumbling old Hôtel de Saverne in the centre of the place, and a straggling street stretching on either side. Behind the house were melancholy gardens, squared and clipped after the ancient French fashion, and, beyond the garden wall, some fields and woods, part of the estate of the Saverne family. These fields and woods were fringed by another great forest, which had once been the property of the house of Saverne, but had been purchased from the late easy proprietor by Messeigneurs de Rohan, Princes of the Empire, of France, and the Church, Cardinals, and Archbishops of Strasbourg, between whom and their gloomy Protestant neighbour there was no goodwill. Not only questions of faith separated them, but questions of *chasse*. The Count de

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Saverne, who loved shooting, and beat his meagre woods for game with a couple of lean dogs, and a fowling-piece over his shoulder, sometimes came in sight of the grand hunting-parties of Monseigneur the Cardinal, who went to the chase like a Prince as he was, with piqueurs and horn-blowers, whole packs of dogs, and a troop of gentlemen in his uniform. Not seldom his Eminence's keepers and Monsieur de Saverne's solitary garde-chasse had quarrels. "Tell your master that I will shoot any red-legs which come upon my land," Monsieur de Saverne said in one of these controversies, as he held up a partridge which he had just brought down; and the keeper knew the moody nobleman would be true to his word.

Two neighbours so ill disposed towards one another were speedily at law; and in the courts at Strasbourg a poor provincial gentleman was likely to meet with scanty justice when opposed to such a powerful enemy as the Prince Archbishop of the Province, one of the greatest noblemen of the kingdom. Boundary questions, in a land where there are no hedges—game, forest, and fishery questions—how can I tell, who am no lawyer, what set the gentlemen at loggerheads? In later days, I met one Monsieur Georgel, an Abbé, who had been a secretary of the Prince Cardinal, and he told me that Monsieur de Saverne was a headlong, violent, ill-conditioned little *mauvais coucheur*, as they say in France, and ready to quarrel with or without a reason.

These quarrels naturally took the Count de Saverne to his advocates and lawyers at Strasbourg, and he would absent himself for days from home, where his poor wife was perhaps not sorry to be rid of him. It chanced, on one of these expeditions to the chief town of his province, that he fell in with a former comrade in his campaigns of Hastenbeck and Laufeldt, an officer of Soubise's regiment, the Baron de la Motte.* La Motte had been destined to the Church, like many cadets of good family, but, his elder brother dying, he was released from the tonsure and the seminary, and entered the army under good protection. Mesdemoiselles de Saverne remembered this Monsieur de la Motte at Nanci in old days. He bore the worst of characters; he was gambler, intriguer, duellist, profligate. I suspect that most gentlemen's reputations come off ill under the tongues of these old ladies, and have heard *of other countries* where *mesdemoiselles* are equally hard to please. "Well, have we not all our faults?" I imagine Monsieur de Saverne saying, in a rage. "Is there no such thing as calumny? Are we

* That unlucky Prince de Rohan was to suffer by another Delamotte, who, with his "Valoise" of a wife, played such a notorious part in the famous "diamond necklace" business; but the two *worthies* were not, I believe, related.—D. D.

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never to repent, if we have been wrong? I know he has led a wild youth. Others may have done as much. But prodigals have been reclaimed ere now, and I for my part will not turn my back on this one." "Ah, I wish he had!" De la Motte said to me myself in later days; "but it was his fate, his fate!"

One day, then, the Count de Saverne returns home from Strasbourg with his new friend; presents the Baron de la Motte to the ladies of his house, makes the gloomy place as cheerful as he can for his guest, brings forth the best wine from his *cave*, and beats his best covers for game. I myself knew the Baron some years later:—a handsome, tall, sallow-faced man, with a shifty eye, a soft voice, and a grand manner. Monsieur de Saverne for his part was short, black, and ill-favoured, as I have heard my mother say. But Mrs. Duval did not love him, fancying that he ill-treated her Biche. Where she disliked people, my worthy parent would never allow them a single good quality; but she always averred that Monsieur de la Motte was a perfect fine gentleman.

The intimacy between these two gentlemen increased apace. Monsieur de la Motte was ever welcome at Saverne: a room in the house was called his room: their visitor was an acquaintance of their enemy the Cardinal also, and would often come from the one château to the other. Laughingly he would tell how angry Monseigneur was with his neighbour. He wished he could make peace between the two houses. He gave good advice to Monsieur de Saverne, and pointed out the danger he ran in provoking so powerful an adversary. Men had been imprisoned for life for less reason. The Cardinal might get a *lettre de cachet* against his obstinate opponent. He could, besides, ruin Saverne with fines and law costs. The contest between the two was quite unequal, and the weaker party must inevitably be crushed, unless these unhappy disputes should cease. As far as the ladies of the house dared speak, they coincided in the opinion of Monsieur de la Motte, and were for submission and reconciliation with their neighbours. Madame de Saverne's own relations heard of the feud, and implored the Count to bring it to an end. It was one of these, the Baron de Viomesnil, going to command in Corsica, who entreated Monsieur de Saverne to accompany him on the campaign. Anywhere the Count was safer than in his own house with an implacable and irresistible enemy at his gate. Monsieur de Saverne yielded to his kinsman's importunities. He took down his sword and pistols of Laufeldt from the wall, where they had hung for twenty years. He set the affairs of his house in order, and after solemnly assembling his family, and on his knees confiding it to the gracious protection of Heaven, he left home to join the suite of the French General.

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A few weeks after he left home—several years after his marriage—his wife wrote to inform him that she was likely to be a mother. The stern man, who had been very unhappy previously, and chose to think that his wife's barrenness was a punishment of Heaven for some crime of his or hers, was very much moved by this announcement. I have still at home a German Bible which he used, and in which is written in the German a very affecting prayer composed by him, imploring the Divine blessing upon the child about to be born, and hoping that this infant might grow in grace, and bring peace and love and unity into the household. It would appear that he made no doubt he should have a son. His hope and aim were to save in every possible way for this child. I have read many letters of his which he sent from Corsica to his wife, and which she kept. They were full of strange minute orders, as to the rearing and education of this son that was to be born. He enjoined saving amounting to niggardliness in his household, and calculated how much might be put away in ten, in twenty years, so that the coming heir might have a property worthy of his ancient name. In case he should fall in action, he laid commands upon his wife to pursue a system of the most rigid economy, so that the child at coming of age might be able to appear creditably in the world. In these letters, I remember, the events of the campaign were dismissed in a very few words; the main part of the letters consisted of prayers, speculations, and prophecies regarding the child, and sermons couched in the language of the writer's stern creed. When the child was born, and a girl appeared in place of the boy, upon whom the poor father had set his heart, I hear the family were so dismayed, that they hardly dared to break the news to the chief of the house.

Who told me? The same man who said he wished he had never seen M. de Saverne: the man for whom the unhappy gentleman had conceived a warm friendship;—the man who was to bring a mysterious calamity upon those whom, as I do think, and in his selfish way, he loved sincerely, and he spoke at a time when he could have little desire to deceive me.

The lord of the castle is gone on the campaign. The *châtelaine* is left alone in her melancholy tower with her two dismal duennas. My good mother, speaking in later days about these matters, took up the part of her Biche against the ladies of Barr and their brother, and always asserted that the tyranny of the duennas, and the meddling, and the verbosity, and the ill-temper of M. de Saverne himself, brought about the melancholy events which now presently ensued. The Count de Saverne was a little man (my mother said) who loved to hear himself talk, and who held forth from morning

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till night. His life was a fuss. He would weigh the coffee, and count the lumps of sugar, and have a finger in every pie in his frugal house. Night and morning he preached sermons to his family, and he continued to preach when not *en chaire*, laying down the law upon all subjects, untiringly voluble. Cheerfulness in the company of such a man was hypocrisy. Mesdames de Barr had to disguise weariness, to assume an air of contentment, and to appear to be interested when the Count preached. As for the Count's sisters, they were accustomed to listen to their brother and lord with respectful submission. They had a hundred domestic occupations: they had baking and boiling, and pickling, and washing, and endless embroidery: the life of the little château was quite supportable to them. They knew no better. Even in their father's days at Nanci, the ungainly women kept pretty much aloof from the world, and were little better than domestic servants in waiting on Monseigneur.

And Madame de Saverne, on her first entrance into the family, accepted the subordinate position meekly enough. She spun and she bleached, and she worked great embroideries, and busied herself about her house, and listened demurely whilst Monsieur le Comte was preaching. But then there came a time when her duties interested her no more, when his sermons became especially wearisome, when sharp words passed between her and her lord, and the poor thing exhibited symptoms of impatience and revolt. And with the revolt arose awful storms and domestic battles; and after battles, submission, reconciliation, forgiveness, hypocrisy.

It has been said that Monsieur de Saverne loved the sound of his own croaking voice, and to hold forth to his own congregation. Night after night he and his friend Monsieur de la Motte would have religious disputes together, in which the Huguenot gentleman flattered himself that he constantly had the better of the ex-pupil of the seminary. I was not present naturally, not setting my foot on French ground until five-and-twenty years after, but I can fancy Madame the Countess sitting at her tambour-frame, and the old duenna ladies at their cards, and the combat of the churches going on between these two champions in the little old saloon of the Hôtel de Saverne. "As I hope for pardon," Monsieur de la Motte said to me at a supreme moment of his life, "and to meet those whom on earth I loved, and made unhappy, no wrong passed between Clarisse and me, save that wrong which consisted in disguising from her husband the regard we had for one another. Once, twice, thrice, I went away from their house, but that unhappy Saverne would bring me back, and I was only too glad to return. I would let him talk for hours—I own it—so that I might be

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near Clarisse. I had to answer from time to time, and rubbed up my old seminary learning to reply to his sermons. I must often have spoken at random, for my thoughts were far away from the poor man's *radotages*, and he could no more change my convictions than he could change the colour of my skin. Hours and hours thus passed away. They would have been intolerably tedious to others: they were not so to me. I preferred that gloomy little château to the finest place in Europe. To see Clarisse, was all I asked. Denis! There is a power irresistible impelling all of us. From the moment I first set eyes on her, I knew she was my fate. I shot an English grenadier at Hastenbeck, who would have bayoneted poor Saverne but for me. As I lifted him up from the ground, I thought, 'I shall have to repent of ever having seen that man.' I felt the same thing, Duval, when I saw you." And as the unhappy gentleman spoke, I remembered how I for my part felt a singular and unpleasant sensation as of terror and approaching evil when first I looked at that handsome, ill-omened face.

I thankfully believe the words which Monsieur de la Motte spoke to me at a time when he could have no cause to disguise the truth; and am assured of the innocence of the Countess de Saverne. Poor lady! if she erred in thought, she had to pay so awful a penalty for her crime, that we humbly hope it has been forgiven her. She was not true to her husband, though she did him no wrong. If, while trembling before him, she yet had dissimulation enough to smile and be merry, I suppose no preacher or husband would be very angry with her for *that* hypocrisy. I have seen a slave in the West Indies soundly cuffed for looking sulky: we expect our negroes to be obedient, and to be happy too.

Now when Monsieur de Saverne went away to Corsica, I suspect he was strongly advised to take that step by his friend Monsieur de la Motte. When he was gone, Monsieur de la Motte did not present himself at the Hôtel de Saverne, where an old schoolfellow of his, a pastor and preacher from Kehl, on the German Rhine bank, was installed in command of the little garrison, from which its natural captain had been obliged to withdraw; but there is no doubt that poor Clarisse deceived this gentleman and her two sisters-in-law, and acted towards them with a very culpable hypocrisy.

Although there was a deadly feud between the two châteaux of Saverne—namely, the Cardinal's new-built castle in the Park, and the Count's hotel in the little town—yet each house knew more or less of the other's doings. When the Prince Cardinal and his Court were at Saverne, Mesdemoiselles de Barr were kept perfectly well-informed of all the festivities which they did not

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share. In our little Fareport here do not the Miss Prys, my neighbours, know what I have for dinner, the amount of my income, the price of my wife's last gown, and the items of my son's, Captain Scapegrace's, tailor's bill. No doubt the ladies of Barr were equally well-informed of the doings of the Prince Coadjutor and his Court. Such gambling, such splendour, such painted hussies from Strasbourg, such plays, masquerades, and orgies as took place in that castle! Mesdemoiselles had the very latest particulars of all these horrors, and the Cardinal's castle was to them as the castle of a wicked ogre. From her little dingy tower at night Madame de Saverne could look out, and see the Cardinal's sixty palace windows all aflame. Of summer nights, gusts of unhallowed music would be heard from the great house, where dancing festivals, theatrical pieces even, were performed. Though Madame de Saverne was forbidden by her husband to frequent those assemblies, the townspeople were up to the palace from time to time, and Madame could not help hearing of the doings there. In spite of the Count's prohibition, his gardener poached in the Cardinal's woods; one or two of the servants were smuggled in to see a fête or a ball; then Madame's own woman went; then Madame herself began to have a wicked longing to go, as Madame's first ancestress had for the fruit of the forbidden tree. Is not the apple always ripe on that tree, and does not the tempter for ever invite you to pluck and eat? Madame de Saverne had a lively little waiting-maid, whose bright eyes loved to look into neighbours' parks and gardens, and who had found favour with one of the domestics of the Prince Archbishop. This woman brought news to her mistress of the feasts, balls, banquets, nay, comedies, which were performed at the Prince Cardinal's. The Prince's gentlemen went hunting in his uniform. He was served on plate, and a lacquey in his livery stood behind each guest. He had the French comedians over from Strasbourg. Oh! that Monsieur de Molière was a droll gentleman; and how grand the "Cid" was!

Now, to see these plays and balls, Martha, the maid, must have had intelligence in and out of both the houses of Saverne. She must have deceived those old dragons, Mesdemoiselles. She must have had means of creeping out at the gate, and silently creeping back again. She told her mistress everything she saw, acted the plays for her, and described the dresses of the ladies and gentlemen. Madame de Saverne was never tired of hearing her maid's stories. When Martha was going to a fête, Madame lent her some little ornament to wear, and yet when Pasteur Schnorr and Mesdemoiselles talked of the proceedings at Great Saverne, and

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as if the fires of Gomorrah were ready to swallow up that palace, and all within it, the Lady of Saverne sat demurely in silence, and listened to their croaking and sermons. Listened? The pastor exhorted the household, the old ladies talked night after night, and poor Madame de Saverne never heeded. Her thoughts were away in Great Saverne; her spirit was for ever hankering about those woods. Letters came now and again from Monsieur de Saverne, with the army. They had been engaged with the enemy. Very good. He was unhurt. Heaven be praised! And then the grim husband read his poor little wife a grim sermon; and the grim sisters and the chaplain commented on it. Once, after an action at Calvi, Monsieur de Saverne, who was always specially lively in moments of danger, described how narrowly he had escaped with his life, and the chaplain took advantage of the circumstance, and delivered to the household a prodigious discourse on death, on danger, on preservation here and hereafter, and alas, and alas! poor Madame de Saverne found that she had not listened to a word of the homily. Her thoughts were not with the preacher, nor with the captain of Viomesnil's regiment before Calvi; they were in the palace at Great Saverne, with the balls, and the comedies, and the music, and the fine gentlemen from Paris and Strasbourg, and out of the Empire beyond the Rhine, who frequented the Prince's entertainments.

What happened where the wicked spirit was whispering "Eat," and the tempting apple hung within reach? One night when the household was at rest, Madame de Saverne, muffled in cloak and calash, with a female companion similarly disguised, tripped silently out of the back gate of the Hôtel de Saverne, found a carriole in waiting, with a driver who apparently knew the road and the passengers he was to carry, and after half-an-hour's drive through the straight avenues of the park of Great Saverne, alighted at the gates of the château, where the driver gave up the reins of the carriole to a domestic in waiting, and, by doors and passages which seemed perfectly well-known to him, the coachman and the two women entered the castle together and found their way to a gallery in a great hall, in which many lords and ladies were seated, and at the end of which was a stage, with a curtain before it. Men and women came backwards and forwards on this stage, and recited dialogue in verses. O mercy! it was a comedy they were acting, one of those wicked delightful plays which she was forbidden to see, and which she was longing to behold! After the comedy was to be a ball, in which the actors would dance in their stage habits. Some of the people were in masks already, and in that box near to the stage, surrounded by a little crowd of dominoes, sate

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Monseigneur the Prince Cardinal himself. Madame de Saverne had seen him and his cavalcade sometimes returning from hunting. She would have been as much puzzled to say what the play was about as to give an account of Pasteur Schnorr's sermon a few hours before. But Frontin made jokes with his master Damis; and Géronte locked up the doors of his house, and went to bed grumbling; and it grew quite dark, and Mathurine flung a rope-ladder out of window, and she and her mistress Elmire came down the ladder; and Frontin held it, and Elmire, with a little cry, fell into the arms of Monsieur Damis; and master and man, and maid and mistress, sang a merry chorus together, in which human frailty was very cheerfully depicted; and when they had done, away they went to the gondola which was in waiting at the canal stairs, and so good-night. And when old Géronte, wakened up by the disturbance, at last came forth in his nightcap, and saw the boat paddling away out of reach, you may be sure that the audience laughed at the poor impotent raging old wretch. It was a very merry play indeed, and is still popular and performed in France and elsewhere.

After the play came a ball. Would Madame dance? Would the noble Countess of Saverne dance with a coachman? There were others below on the dancing-floor dressed in mask and domino as she was. Who ever said she had a mask and domino? You see it has been stated that she was muffled in cloak and calash. Well, is not a domino a cloak? and has it not a hood or calash appended to it? and, pray, do not women wear masks at home as well as at the Ridotto?

Another question arises here. A high-born lady entrusts herself to a charioteer, who drives her to the castle of a prince her husband's enemy. Who was her companion? Of course he could be no other than that luckless Monsieur de la Motte. He had never been very far away from Madame de Saverne since her husband's departure. In spite of chaplains, and duennas, and guards, and locks and keys, he had found means of communicating with her. How? By what lies and stratagems? By what arts and bribery? These poor people are both gone to their account. Both suffered a fearful punishment. I will not describe their follies, and don't care to be Monsieur Figaro, and hold the ladder and lantern, while the Count scales Rosina's window. Poor frightened erring soul! She suffered an awful penalty for what, no doubt, was a great wrong.

A child almost, she was married to Monsieur de Saverne, without knowing him, without liking him, because her parents ordered her, and because she was bound to comply with their will. She

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was sold, and went to her slavery. She lived at first obediently enough. If she shed tears, they were dried; if she quarrelled with her husband, the two were presently reconciled. She bore no especial malice, and was as gentle, subordinate a slave as ever you shall see in Jamaica or Barbadoes. Nobody's tears were sooner dried, as I should judge: none would be more ready to kiss the hand of the overseer who drove her. But you don't expect sincerity and subservience too. I know, for my part, a lady who only obeys when she likes: and faith! it may be it is *I* who am the hypocrite, and have to tremble, and smile, and swindle before *her*.

When Madame de Saverne's time was nearly come, it was ordered that she should go to Strasbourg, where the best medical assistance is to be had: and here, six months after her husband's departure for Corsica, their child, Agnes de Saverne, was born.

Did secret terror and mental disquietude and remorse now fall on the unhappy lady? She wrote to my mother, at this time her only confidante (and yet not a confidante at all!)—"O Ursule! I dread this event. Perhaps I shall die. I think I hope I shall. In these long days since he has been away, I have got so to dread his return, that I believe I shall go mad when I see him. Do you know, after the battle before Calvi, when I read that many officers had been killed, I thought, is Monsieur de Saverne killed? And I read the list down, and his name was not there: and, my sister, my sister, I was not glad! Have I come to be such a monster as to wish my own husband——No. I wish I was. I can't speak to Monsieur Schnorr about this. He is so stupid. He doesn't understand me. He is like my husband, for ever preaching me his sermons.

"Listen, Ursule! Speak it to nobody! I have been to hear a sermon. Oh, it was indeed divine! It was not from one of our pastors. Oh, how they weary me! It was from a good bishop of the *French* Church—not our *German* Church—the Bishop of Amiens—who happens to be here on a visit to the Cardinal Prince. The bishop's name is *Monsieur de la Motte*. He is a relative of a gentleman of whom we have seen a great deal lately—of a great friend of Monsieur de Saverne, *who saved my husband's life* in the battle M. de S. is always talking about.

"How beautiful the cathedral is! It was night when I went. The church was lighted like the stars, and the music was like *Heaven*. Ah, how different from Monsieur Schnorr at home, from —from somebody *else* at my new home who is *always* preaching—that is, when he is at home! Poor man! I wonder whether he preaches to them in Corsica! I pity them if he does. Don't mention the cathedral if you write to me. The dragons don't know

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anything about it. How they would scold if they did! Oh, how they ennuyent me, the dragons! Behold them! They think I am writing to my husband. Ah, Ursule! When I write to him, I sit for hours before the paper. I say nothing; and what I say seems to be lies. Whereas when I write to you, my pen runs—runs! The paper is covered before I think I have begun. So it is when I write to —— I do believe that *vilain dragon* is peering at my note with her spectacles! Yes, my good sister, I am writing to Monsieur le Comte!"

To this letter a postscript is added, as by the Countess's command, in the German language, in which Madame de Saverne's medical attendant announces the birth of a daughter, and that the child and mother are doing well.

That daughter is sitting before me now—with spectacles on nose too—very placidly spelling the Portsmouth paper, where I hope she will soon read the promotion of Monsieur Scapegrace, her son. She has exchanged her noble name for mine, which is only humble and honest. My dear! your eyes are not so bright as once I remember them, and the raven locks are streaked with silver. To shield thy head from dangers has been the blessed chance and duty of my life. When I turn towards her, and see her moored in our harbour of rest, after our life's chequered voyage, calm and happy, a sense of immense gratitude fills my being, and my heart says a hymn of praise.

The first days of the life of Agnes de Saverne were marked by incidents which were strangely to influence her career. Around her little cradle a double, a triple tragedy was about to be enacted. Strange that death, crime, revenge, remorse, mystery, should attend round the cradle of one so innocent and pure—as pure and innocent, I pray Heaven now, as upon that day when, at scarce a month old, the adventures of her life began.

That letter to my mother, written by Madame de Saverne on the eve of her child's birth, and finished by her attendant, bears date November 25, 1768. A month later Martha Seebach, her attendant, wrote (in German) that her mistress had suffered frightfully from fever; so much so that her reason left her for some time, and her life was despaired of. Mesdemoiselles de Barr were for bringing up the child by hand; but not being versed in nursery practices, the infant had ailed sadly until restored to its mother. Madame de Saverne was now tranquil. Madame was greatly better. She had suffered most fearfully. In her illness she was constantly calling for her foster-sister to protect her from some danger which, as she appeared to fancy, menaced Madame.

Child as I was at the time when these letters were passing, I

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remember the arrival of the next. It lies in yonder drawer, and was written by a poor fevered hand which is now cold, in ink which is faded after fifty years.* I remember my mother screaming out in German, which she always spoke when strongly moved, "Dear Heaven, my child is mad—is mad!" And indeed that poor faded letter contains a strange rhapsody.

"Ursule!" she wrote (I do not care to give at length the words of the poor wandering creature), "after my child was born the demons wanted to take her from me. But I struggled and kept her quite close, and now they can no longer hurt her. I took her to church. Martha went with me, and He was there—he always is—to defend me from the demons, and I had her christened Agnes, and I was christened Agnes too. Think of my being christened at twenty-two! Agnes the First, and Agnes the Second. But though my name is changed, I am always the same to my Ursule, and my name now is, Agnes Clarisse de Saverne, born de Viomesnil."

She had actually, when not quite mistress of her own reason, been baptized into the Roman Catholic Church with her child. Was she sane when she so acted? Had she thought of the step before taking it? Had she known Catholic clergymen at Saverne, or had she other reasons for her conversion than those which were furnished in the conversations which took place between her husband and Monsieur de la Motte? In this letter the poor lady says, "Yesterday two persons came to my bed with gold crowns round their heads. One was dressed like a priest; one was beautiful and covered with arrows; and they said, 'We are Saint Fabian and Saint Sebastian; and to-morrow is the day of Saint Agnes: and she will be at church to receive you there.'"

What the real case was I never knew. The Protestant clergyman whom I saw in after days could only bring his book to show that he had christened the infant, not Agnes, but Augustine. Martha Seebach is dead. La Motte, when I conversed with him, did not touch upon this part of the poor lady's history. I conjecture that the images and pictures which she had seen in the churches operated upon her fevered brain; that, having procured a Roman Calendar and Missal, she knew saints' days and feasts; and, not yet recovered from her delirium or quite responsible for the actions which she performed, she took her child to the cathedral, and was baptized there.

And now, no doubt, the poor lady had to practise more deceit and concealment. The "demons" were the old maiden sisters left

* The memoirs appear to have been written in the years '20, '21. Mr. Duval was gazetted Rear-Admiral and K.C.B. in the promotions on the accession of King George IV.

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to watch over her. She had to hoodwink these. Had she not done so before—when she went to the Cardinal's palace at Saverne? Wherever the poor thing moved I fancy those ill-omened eyes of La Motte glimmering upon her out of the darkness. Poor Eve—not lost quite, I pray and think,—but that serpent was ever trailing after her, and she was to die poisoned in its coil. Who shall understand the awful ways of Fate? A year after that period regarding which I write, a lovely Imperial Princess rode through the Strasbourg streets radiant and blushing, amidst pealing bells, roaring cannons, garlands and banners, and shouting multitudes. Did any one ever think that the last stage of that life's journey was to be taken in a hideous tumbrel, and to terminate on the scaffold? The life of Madame de Saverne was to last but a year more, and her end to be scarcely less tragical.

Many physicians have told me how often after the birth of a child the brain of a mother will be affected. Madame de Saverne remained for some time in this febrile condition, if not unconscious of her actions, at least not accountable for all of them. At the end of three months she woke up as out of a dream, having a dreadful recollection of the circumstances which had passed. Under what hallucinations we never shall know, or yielding to what persuasions, the wife of a stern Protestant nobleman had been to a Roman Catholic church, and had been christened there with her child. She never could recall that step. A great terror came over her as she thought of it—a great terror and a hatred of her husband, the cause of all her grief and her fear. She began to look out lest he should return; she clutched her child to her breast, and barred and bolted all doors for fear people should rob her of the infant. The Protestant chaplain, the Protestant sisters-in-law, looked on with dismay and anxiety; they thought justly that Madame de Saverne was not yet quite restored to her reason; they consulted the physicians, who agreed with them; who arrived, who prescribed; who were treated by the patient with scorn, laughter, insult sometimes; sometimes with tears and terror, according to her wayward mood. Her condition was most puzzling. The sisters wrote from time to time guarded reports respecting her to her husband in Corsica. He, for his part, replied instantly with volumes of his wonted verbose commonplace. He acquiesced in the decrees of Fate, when informed that a daughter was born to him; and presently wrote whole reams of instructions regarding her nurture, dress, and physical and religious training. The child was called Agnes? He would have preferred Barbara, as being his mother's name. I remember in some of the poor gentleman's letters there were orders about the child's pap, and instructions as to the nurse's

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diet. He was coming home soon. The Corsicans had been defeated in every action. Had he been a Catholic he would have been a knight of the King's orders long ere this. Monsieur de Viomesnil hoped still to get for him the order of Military Merit (the Protestant order which his Majesty had founded ten years previously). These letters (which were subsequently lost by an accident at sea *) spoke modestly enough of the Count's personal adventures. I hold him to have been a very brave man, and only not tedious and prolix when he spoke of his own merits and services.

The Count's letters succeeded each other post after post. The end of the war was approaching, and with it his return was assured. He exulted in the thought of seeing his child, and leading her in the way she should go—the right way, the true way. As the mother's brain cleared, her terror grew greater—her terror and loathing of her husband. She could not bear the thought of his return, or to face him with the confession which she knew she must make. His wife turn Catholic and baptize his child? She felt he would kill her, did he know what had happened. She went to the priest who had baptized her. Monsieur Georgel (his Eminence's secretary) knew her husband. The Prince Cardinal was so great and powerful a prelate, Georgel said, that he would protect her against all the wrath of all the Protestants in France. I think she must have had interviews with the Prince Cardinal, though there is no account of them in any letter to my mother.

The campaign was at an end. Monsieur de Vaux, Monsieur de Viomesnil, both wrote in highly eulogistic terms of the conduct of the Count de Saverne. Their good wishes would attend him home; Protestant as he was, their best interest should be exerted in his behalf.

The day of the Count's return approached. The day arrived: I can fancy the brave gentleman with beating heart ascending the steps of the homely lodging where his family have been living at Strasbourg ever since the infant's birth. How he has dreamt about that child: prayed for her and his wife at night-watch and bivouac—prayed for them as he stood, calm and devout, in the midst of battle. . . .

When he enters the room, he sees only two frightened domestics and the two ghastly faces of his scared old sisters.

"Where are Clarisse and the child?" he asks.

The child and the mother were gone. The aunts knew not where.

* The letters from *Madame de Saverne* to my mother at Winchelsea were not subject to this mishap, but were always kept by Madame Duval in her own escritoire.

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A stroke of palsy could scarcely have smitten the unhappy gentleman more severely than did the news which his trembling family was obliged to give him. In later days I saw Monsieur Schnorr, the German pastor from Kehl, who has been mentioned already, and who was installed in the Count's house as tutor and chaplain during the absence of the master. "When Madame de Saverne went to make her *coucher* at Strasbourg" (Monsieur Schnorr said to me), "I retired to my duties at Kehl, glad enough to return to the quiet of my home, for the noble lady's reception of me was anything but gracious; and I had to endure much female sarcasm and many unkind words from Madame la Comtesse, whenever, as in duty bound, I presented myself at her table. Sir, that most unhappy lady used to make sport of me before her domestics. She used to call me her gaoler. She used to mimic my ways of eating and drinking. She would yawn in the midst of my exhortations, and cry out, 'O que c'est bête!' and when I gave out a psalm, would utter little cries, and say, 'Pardon me, Monsieur Schnorr, but you sing so out of tune you make my head ache;' so that I could scarcely continue that portion of the service, the very domestics laughing at me when I began to sing. My life was a martyrdom, but I bore my tortures meekly, out of a sense of duty and my love for Monsieur le Comte. When her Ladyship kept her chamber I used to wait almost daily upon Mesdemoiselles the Count's sisters, to ask news of her and her child. I christened the infant; but her mother was too ill to be present, and sent me out word by Mademoiselle Marthe that *she* should call the child Agnes, though I might name it what I pleased. This was on the 21st January, and I remember being struck, because in the Roman Calendar the feast of Saint Agnes is celebrated on that day.

"Haggard and actually grown grey, from a black man which he was, my poor lord came to me with wildness and agony of grief in all his features and actions, to announce to me that Madame the Countess had fled, taking her infant with her. And he had a scrap of paper with him, over which he wept and raged as one demented; now pouring out fiercer imprecations, now bursting into passionate tears and cries, calling upon his wife, his darling, his prodigal to come back, to bring him his child, when all should be forgiven. As he thus spoke his screams and groans were so piteous, that I myself was quite unmanned, and my mother, who keeps house for me (and who happened to be listening at the door), was likewise greatly alarmed by my poor lord's passion of grief. And when I read on that paper that my Lady Countess had left the faith to which our fathers gloriously testified in the midst of trouble,

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slaughter, persecution, and bondage, I was scarcely less shocked than my good lord himself.

"We crossed the bridge to Strasbourg back again and went to the Cathedral Church, and entering there, we saw the Abbé Georgel coming out of a chapel where he had been to perform his devotions. The Abbé, who knew me, gave a ghastly smile as he recognised me, and for a pale man his cheek blushed up a little when I said; 'This is Monsieur the Comte de Saverne.'

"'Where is she?' asked my poor lord, clutching the Abbé's arm.

"'Who?' asked the Abbé, stepping back a little.

"'Where is my child? where is my wife?' cries the Count.

"'Silence, Monsieur!' says the Abbé. 'Do you know in whose house you are?' and the chant from the altar, where the service was being performed, came upon us, and smote my poor lord as though a shot had struck him. We were standing, he tottering against a pillar in the nave, close by the christening font, and over my Lord's head was a picture of Saint Agnes.

"The agony of the poor gentleman could not but touch any one who witnessed it. 'Monsieur le Comte,' says the Abbé, 'I feel for you. This great surprise has come upon you unprepared—I—I pray that it may be for your good.'

"'You know, then, what has happened?' asked Monsieur de Saverne; and the Abbé was obliged to stammer a confession that he *did* know what had occurred. He was, in fact, the very man who had performed the rite which separated my unhappy lady from the Church of her fathers.

"'Sir,' he said, with some spirit, 'this was a service which no clergyman could refuse. I would to Heaven, Monsieur, that you, too, might be brought to ask it from me.'

"The poor Count, with despair in his face, asked to see the register which confirmed the news, and there we saw that, on the 21st January 1769, being the Feast of Saint Agnes, the noble lady, Clarisse, Countess of Saverne, born De Viomesnil, aged twenty-two years, and Agnes, only daughter of the same Count of Saverne and Clarisse his wife, were baptized and received into the Church in the presence of two witnesses (clerics) whose names were signed.

"The poor Count knelt over the registry-book with an awful grief in his face, and in a mood which I heartily pitied. He bent down uttering what seemed an imprecation rather than a prayer, and at this moment it chanced the service at the chief altar was concluded, and Monseigneur and his suite of clergy came into the sacristy. Sir, the Count de Saverne, starting up, clutching his sword in his hand, and shaking his fist at the Cardinal, uttered a wild speech calling down imprecations upon the Church of which

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the Prince was a chief: 'Where is my lamb that you have taken from me?' he said, using the language of the Prophet towards the King who had despoiled him.

"The Cardinal haughtily said the conversion of Madame de Saverne was of Heaven, and no act of his, and adding, 'Bad neighbour as you have been to me, sir, I wish you so well that I hope you may follow her.'

"At this the Count, losing all patience, made a violent attack upon the Church of Rome, denounced the Cardinal, and called down maledictions upon his head; said that a day would come when his abominable pride should meet with a punishment and fall; and spoke as, in fact, the poor gentleman was able to do only too readily and volubly, against Rome and all its errors.

"The Prince Louis de Rohan replied with no little dignity, as I own. He said that such words in such a place were offensive and out of all reason; that it only depended on him to have Monsieur de Saverne arrested and punished for blasphemy and insult to the Church: but that, pitying the Count's unhappy condition, the Cardinal would forget the hasty and insolent words he had uttered—as he would know how to defend Madame de Saverne and her child after the righteous step which she had taken. And he swept out of the sacristy with his suite, and passed through the door which leads into his palace, leaving my poor Count still in his despair and fury.

"As he spoke, with those Scripture phrases which Monsieur de Saverne ever had at command, I remember how the Prince Cardinal tossed up his head and smiled. I wonder whether he thought of the words when his own day of disgrace came, and the fatal affair of the diamond necklace which brought him to ruin."*

"Not without difficulty" (Monsieur Schnorr resumed) "I induced the poor Count to quit the church where his wife's apostasy had been performed. The outer gates and walls are decorated with numberless sculptures of saints of the Roman Calendar: and for a minute or two the poor man stood on the threshold shouting imprecations in the sunshine, and calling down woe upon France and Rome. I hurried him away. Such language was dangerous, and could bring no good to either of us. He was almost a madman, when I conducted him back to his home, where the ladies his sisters, scared with his wild looks, besought me not to leave him.

"Again he went into the room which his wife and child had inhabited, and, as he looked at the relics of both which still were

* My informant, Protestant though he was, did not, as I remember, speak with very much asperity against the Prince Cardinal. He said that the Prince lived an edifying life after his fall, succouring the poor, and doing everything in his power to defend the cause of royalty.—D. D.

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left there, gave way to bursts of grief which were pitiable indeed to witness. I speak of what happened near forty years ago, and remember the scene as though yesterday: the passionate agony of the poor gentleman, the sobs and prayers. On a chest of drawers there was a little cap belonging to the infant. He seized it: kissed it: wept over it: calling upon the mother to bring the child back and he would forgive all. He thrust the little cap into his breast: opened every drawer, book, and closet, seeking for some indications of the fugitives. My opinion was, and that even of the ladies, sisters of Monsieur le Comte, that Madame had taken refuge in a convent with the child; that the Cardinal knew where she was, poor and friendless; and that the Protestant gentleman would in vain seek for her. Perhaps when tired of that place—I for my part thought Madame la Comtesse a light-minded wilful person, who certainly had no *vocation*, as the Catholics call it, for a religious life—I thought she might come out after a while, and gave my patron such consolation as I could devise, upon this faint hope. He who was all forgiveness at one minute, was all wrath the next. He would rather see his child dead than receive her as a Catholic. He would go to the King, surrounded by harlots as he was, and ask for justice. There were still Protestant gentlemen left in France whose spirit was not altogether trodden down, and they would back him in demanding reparation for this outrage.

"I had some vague suspicion, which, however, I dismissed from my mind as unworthy, that there might be a third party cognisant of Madame's flight; and this was a gentleman, once a great favourite of Monsieur le Comte, and in whom I myself was not a little interested. Three or four days after the Comte de Saverne went away to the war, as I was meditating on a sermon which I proposed to deliver, walking at the back of my Lord's house of Saverne, in the fields which skirt the wood where the Prince Cardinal's great Schloss stands, I saw this gentleman with a gun over his shoulder, and recognised him—the Chevalier de la Motte, the very person who had saved the life of Monsieur de Saverne in the campaign against the English.

"Monsieur de la Motte said he was staying with the Cardinal, and trusted that the ladies of Saverne were well. He sent his respectful compliments to them: in a laughing way said he had been denied the door when he came to a visit, which he thought was an unkind act towards an old comrade; and at the same time expressed his sorrow at the Count's departure—'for, Herr Pfarrer,' said he, 'you know I am a good Catholic, and in many most important conversations which I had with the Comte de Saverne, the differences between our two Churches was the subject of our talk,

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and I do think I should have converted him to ours.' I, humble village pastor as I am, was not afraid to speak in such a cause, and we straightway had a most interesting conversation together, in which, as the gentleman showed, I had not the worst of the argument. It appeared he had been educated for the Roman Church, but afterwards entered the army. He was a most interesting man, and his name was Le Chevalier de la Motte. You look as if you had known him, Monsieur le Capitaine—will it please you to replenish your pipe, and take another glass of my beer?"

I said I had *effectivement* known Monsieur de la Motte; and the good old clergyman (with many compliments to me for speaking French and German so glibly) proceeded with his artless narrative: "I was ever a poor horseman: and when I came to be chaplain and major-domo at the Hôtel de Saverne, in the Count's absence, Madame more than once rode entirely away from me, saying that she could not afford to go at my clerical jog-trot. And being in a scarlet amazon, and a conspicuous object, you see, I thought I saw her at a distance talking to a gentleman on a schimmel horse, in a grass-green coat. When I asked her to whom she spoke, she said, 'Monsieur le Pasteur, you radotez with your grey horse and your green coat! If you are set to be a spy over me, ride faster, or bring out the old ladies to bark at your side.' The fact is, the Countess was for ever quarrelling with those old ladies, and they were a yelping ill-natured pair. They treated me, a pastor of the Reformed Church of the Augsburg Confession, as no better than a lacquey, sir, and made me eat the bread of humiliation; whereas Madame la Comtesse, though often haughty, flighty, and passionate, could also be so winning and gentle, that no one could resist her. Ah sir!" said the pastor, "that woman had a coaxing way with her when she chose, and when her flight came I was in such a way that the jealous old sisters-in-law said I was in love with her myself. Pfui! For a month before my Lord's arrival I had been knocking at all doors to see if I could find my poor wandering lady behind them. She, her child, and Martha her maid, were gone, and we knew not whither.

"On that very first day of his unhappy arrival, Monsieur le Comte discovered what his sisters, jealous and curious as they were, what I, a man of no inconsiderable acumen, had failed to note. Amongst torn papers and chiffons, in her Ladyship's bureau, there was a scrap with one line in her handwriting—'Ursule, Ursule, le tyran rev——' and no more.

"'Ah!' Monsieur le Comte said, 'she is gone to her foster-sister in England! Quick, quick, horses!' And before two hours were passed he was on horseback, making the first stage of that long journey."

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CHAPTER III

THE TRAVELLERS

THE poor gentleman was in such haste that the old proverb was realised in his case, and his journey was anything but speedy. At Nanci he fell ill of a fever, which had nearly carried him off, and in which he unceasingly raved about his child, and called upon his faithless wife to return her. Almost before he was convalescent, he was on his way again, to Boulogne, where he saw that English coast on which he rightly conjectured his fugitive wife was sheltered.

And here, from my boyish remembrance, which, respecting these early days, remains extraordinarily clear, I can take up the story, in which I was myself a very young actor, playing in the strange, fantastic, often terrible, drama which ensued a not insignificant part. As I survey it now, the curtain is down, and the play long over; as I think of its surprises, disguises, mysteries, escapes, and dangers, I am amazed myself, and sometimes inclined to be almost as great a fatalist as Monsieur de la Motte, who vowed that a superior Power ruled our actions for us, and declared that he could no more prevent his destiny from accomplishing itself, than he could prevent his hair from growing. What a destiny it was! What a fatal tragedy was now about to begin!

One evening in our Midsummer holidays, in the year 1769, I remember being seated in my little chair at home, with a tempest of rain beating down the street. We had customers on most evenings, but there happened to be none on this night; and I remember I was puzzling over a bit of Latin grammar, to which Mother used to keep me stoutly when I came home from school.

It is fifty years since.* I have forgotten who knows how many events of my life, which are not much worth the remembering; but I have as clearly before my eyes now a little scene which occurred on this momentous night, as though it had been acted within this hour. As we are sitting at our various employments, we hear steps coming up the street, which was empty, and

* The narrative seems to have been written about the year 1820.

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silent but for the noise of the wind and rain. We hear steps—several steps—along the pavement, and they stop at our door.

"Madame Duval! It is Gregson!" cries a voice from without.

"Ah, bon Dieu!" says Mother, starting up and turning quite white.

And then I heard the cry of an infant. Dear heart! How well I remember that little cry!

As the door opens, a great gust of wind sets our two candles flickering, and I see enter—

A gentleman giving his arm to a lady who is veiled in cloaks and wraps, an attendant carrying a crying child, and Gregson the boatman after them.

My mother gives a great hoarse shriek, and crying out, "Clarisse! Clarisse!" rushes up to the lady, and hugs and embraces her passionately. The child cries and wails. The nurse strives to soothe the infant. The gentleman takes off his hat and wrings the wet from it, and looks at me. It was then I felt a strange shock and terror. I have felt the same shock once or twice in my life; and once notably, the person so affecting me has been my enemy, and has come to a dismal end.

"We have had a very rough voyage," says the gentleman (in French) to my grandfather. "We have been fourteen hours at sea. Madame has suffered greatly, and is much exhausted."

"Thy rooms are ready," says Mother fondly. "My poor Biche, thou shalt sleep in comfort to-night, and need fear nothing, nothing!"

A few days before I had seen Mother and her servant mightily busy in preparing the rooms on the first floor, and decorating them. When I asked whom she was expecting, she boxed my ears, and bade me be quiet; but these were evidently the expected visitors; and, of course, from the names which Mother used, I knew that the lady was the Countess of Saverne.

"And this is thy son, Ursule?" says the lady. "He is a great boy! My little wretch is always crying."

"Oh, the little darling!" says Mother, seizing the child, which fell to crying louder than ever, "scared by the nodding plume and bristling crest" of Madame Duval, who wore a great cap in those days, and indeed looked as fierce as any Hector.

When the pale lady spoke so harshly about the child, I remember myself feeling a sort of surprise and displeasure. Indeed, I have loved children all my life, and am a fool about them (as witness my treatment of my own rascal), and no one can say that I was ever a tyrant at school, or ever fought there except to hold my own.

My mother produced what food was in the house, and welcomed

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her guests to her humble table. What trivial things remain impressed on the memory! I remember laughing in my boyish way because the lady said, "Ah! c'est ça du thé? je n'en ai jamais goûté. Mais c'est très mauvais, n'est-ce pas, Monsieur le Chevalier?" I suppose they had not learned to drink tea in Alsace yet. Mother stopped my laughing with her usual appeal to my ears. I was daily receiving that sort of correction from the good soul. Grandfather said, if Madame the Countess would like a little tasse of real Nantes brandy after her voyage, he could supply her, but she would have none of that either, and retired soon to her chamber, which had been prepared for her with my mother's best sheets and diapers, and in which was a bed for her maid Martha, who had retired to it with the little crying child. For Monsieur le Chevalier de la Motte an apartment was taken at Mr. Billis's the baker's, down the street: —a friend who gave me many a plum-cake in my childhood, and whose wigs Grandfather dressed, if you must know the truth.

At morning and evening we used to have prayers, which Grandfather spoke with much eloquence; but on this night, as he took out his great Bible, and was for having me read a chapter, my mother said, "No. This poor Clarisse is fatigued, and will go to bed." And to bed accordingly the stranger went. And as I read my little chapter, I remember how tears fell down Mother's cheeks, and how she cried, "Ah, mon Dieu, mon Dieu! ayez pitié d'elle," and when I was going to sing our evening hymn, "Nun ruhen alle Wälder," she told me to hush. Madame upstairs was tired, and wanted to sleep. And she went upstairs to look after Madame, and bade me be a little guide to the strange gentleman, and show him the way to Billis's house. Off I went, prattling by his side; I daresay I soon forgot the terror which I felt when I first saw him. You may be sure all Winchelsea knew that a French lady, and her child, and her maid, were come to stay with Madame Duval, and a French gentleman to lodge over the baker's

I never shall forget my terror and astonishment when Mother told me that this lady who came to us was a Papist. There were two gentlemen of that religion living in our town, at a handsome house called the Priory; but they had little to do with persons in my parents' humble walk of life, though of course my mother would dress Mrs. Weston's head as well as any other lady's. I forgot also to say that Mrs. Duval went out sometimes as ladies' nurse, and in that capacity had attended Mrs. Weston, who, however, lost her child. The Westons had a chapel in their house, in the old grounds of the Priory, and clergymen of their persuasion used to come over from my Lord Newburgh's of Slindon, or from Arundel, where there is another great Papist house; and one or two Roman

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Catholics—there were very few of them in our town—were buried in a part of the old gardens of the Priory, where a monks' burying-place had been before Harry VIII.'s time.

The new gentleman was the first Papist to whom I had ever spoken; and as I trotted about the town with him, showing him the old gates, the church, and so forth, I remember saying to him, "And have you burned any Protestants?"

"Oh, yes!" says he, giving a horrible grin, "I have roasted several, and eaten them afterwards." And I shrank back from him, and his pale grinning face; feeling once more that terror which had come over me when I first beheld him. He was a queer gentleman; he was amused by my simplicity and odd sayings. He was never tired of having me with him. He said I should be his little English master; and indeed he learned the language surprisingly quick, whereas poor Madame de Saverne never understood a word of it.

She was very ill—pale, with a red spot on either cheek, sitting for whole hours in silence, and looking round frightened, as if a prey to some terror. I have seen my mother watching her, and looking almost as scared as the Countess herself. At times, Madame could not bear the crying of the child, and would order it away from her. At other times, she would clutch it, cover it with cloaks, and lock her door, and herself into the chamber with her infant. She used to walk about the house of a night. I had a little room near Mother's, which I occupied during the holidays, and on Saturdays and Sundays, when I came over from Rye. I remember quite well waking up one night and hearing Madame's voice at Mother's door, crying out, "Ursula, Ursula! quick! horses! I must go away. He is coming; I know he is coming!" And then there were remonstrances on Mother's part, and Madame's maid came out of her room, with entreaties to her mistress to return. At the cry of the child the poor mother would rush away from whatever place she was in, and hurry to the infant. Not that she loved it. At the next moment she would cast the child down on the bed, and go to the window again, and look to the sea. For hours she sat at that window, with a curtain twisted round her, as if hiding from some one. Ah! how have I looked up at that window since, and the light twinkling here! I wonder does the house remain yet? I don't like now to think of the passionate grief I have passed through, as I looked up to yon glimmering lattice.

It was evident our poor visitor was in a deplorable condition. The apothecary used to come and shake his head, and order medicine. The medicine did little good. The sleeplessness continued. She was a prey to constant fever. She would make incoherent answers to questions put to her, laugh and weep at odd times and

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places; push her meals away from her, though they were the best my poor mother could supply; order my grandfather to go and sit in the kitchen, and not have the impudence to sit down before her; coax and scold my mother by turns, and take her up very sharply when she rebuked me. Poor Madame Duval was scared by her foster-sister. She, who ruled everybody, became humble before the poor crazy lady. I can see them both now: the lady in white, listless and silent as she would sit for hours taking notice of no one, and Mother watching her with terrified dark eyes.

The Chevalier de la Motte had his lodgings, and came and went between his house and ours. I thought he was the lady's cousin. He used to call himself her cousin: I did not know what our pastor Monsieur Borel meant when he came to Mother one day, and said, "*Fi, donc*, what a pretty business thou hast commenced, Madame Denis—thou, an elder's daughter of our Church!"

"What business?" says Mother.

"That of harbouring crime and sheltering iniquity," says he, naming the crime, viz. No. 7 of the Decalogue.

Being a child, I did not then understand the word he used. But as soon as he had spoken, Mother, taking up a saucepan of soup, cries out, "Get out of there, Monsieur, all pastor as you are, or I will send this soup at thy ugly head, and the saucepan afterwards." And she looked so fierce, that I am not surprised the little man trotted off.

Shortly afterwards Grandfather comes home, looking almost as frightened as his *commanding officer*, Monsieur Borel. Grandfather expostulated with his daughter-in-law. He was in a great agitation. He wondered how she could speak so to the pastor of the church. "All the town," says he, "is talking about you and this unhappy lady."

"All the town is an old woman," replies Madame Duval, stamping her foot, and *twisting her moustache*, I might say, almost. "What? These white-beaks of French cry out because I receive my foster-sister? What? It is wrong to shelter a poor foolish dying woman? Oh, the cowards, the cowards! Listen, petit-papa: if you hear a word said at the club against your *bru*, and do not knock the man down, I will." And, faith, I think Grandfather's *bru* would have kept her word.

I fear my own unlucky simplicity brought part of the opprobrium down upon my poor mother, which she had now to suffer in our French colony; for one day a neighbour, Madame Crochu by name, stepping in and asking, "How is your boarder, and how is her cousin the Count?"

"Madame Clarisse is no better than before," said I (shaking

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my head wisely), "and the gentleman is not a count, and he is not her cousin, Madame Crochu!"

"Oh, he is no relation?" says the mantua-maker. And that story was quickly told over the little town, and when we went to church next Sunday, Monsieur Borel preached a sermon which made all the congregation look to us, and poor Mother sat boiling red like a lobster fresh out of the pot. I did not quite know what I had done: I know what Mother was giving me for my pains, when our poor patient, entering the room, hearing, I suppose, the hissing of the stick (and never word from me—I used to bite a bullet, and hold my tongue), rushed into the room, whisked the cane out of Mother's hand, flung her to the other end of the room with a strength quite surprising, and clasped me up in her arms and began pacing up and down the room, and glaring at Mother. "Strike your own child, monster, monster!" says the poor lady. "Kneel down and ask pardon: or, as sure as I am the queen, I will order your head off!"

At dinner, she ordered me to come and sit by her. "Bishop!" she said to Grandfather, "my lady of honour has been naughty. She whipped the little prince with a scorpion. I took it from her hand. Duke! if she does it again, there is a sword: I desire you to cut the Countess's head off!" And then she took a carving-knife and waved it, and gave one of her laughs, which always set poor Mother a-crying. She used to call us dukes and princes—I don't know what—poor soul! It was the Chevalier de la Motte whom she generally styled duke, holding out her hand, and saying, "Kneel, sir, kneel, and kiss our Royal hand." And Monsieur de la Motte would kneel with a sad sad face, and go through this hapless ceremony. As for Grandfather, who was very bald, and without his wig, being one evening below her window culling a salad in his garden, she beckoned him to her smiling, and when the poor old man came, she upset a dish of tea over his bald pate and said, "I appoint you and anoint you Bishop of Saint Denis!"

The woman Martha, who had been the companion of the Countess de Saverne in her unfortunate flight from home—I believe that since the birth of her child the poor lady had never been in her right senses at all—broke down under the ceaseless watching and care her mistress's condition necessitated, and I have no doubt found her duties yet more painful and difficult when a second mistress, and a very harsh, imperious, and jealous one, was set over her in the person of worthy Madame Duval. My mother was for ordering everybody who would submit to her orders, and entirely managing the affairs of all those whom she loved. She put the mother to bed, and the baby in her cradle; she prepared

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food for both of them, dressed one and the other with an equal affection, and loved that unconscious mother and child with a passionate devotion. But she loved her own way, was jealous of all who came between her and the objects of her love, and no doubt led her subordinates an uncomfortable life.

Three months of Madame Duval tired out the Countess's Alsatian maid, Martha. She revolted and said she would go home. Mother said she was an ungrateful wretch, but was delighted to get rid of her. She always averred the woman stole articles of dress, and trinkets, and laces, belonging to her mistress, before she left us: and in an evil hour this wretched Martha went away. I believe she really loved her mistress, and would have loved the child, had my mother's rigid arms not pushed her from its cot. Poor little innocent, in what tragic gloom did thy life begin! But an unseen Power was guarding that helpless innocence: and sure a good angel watched it in its hour of danger!

So Madame Duval turned Martha out of her tent as Sarah thrust out Hagar. Are women pleased after doing these pretty tricks? · Your ladyships know best. Madame D. not only thrust out Martha, but flung stones after Martha all her life. She went away, not blameless perhaps, but wounded to the quick with the ingratitude which had been shown to her, and a link in that mysterious chain of destiny which was binding *all* these people—me the boy of seven years old; yonder little speechless infant of as many months; that poor wandering lady bereft of reason; that dark inscrutable companion of hers who brought evil with him wherever he came.

From Dungeness to Boulogne is but six-and-thirty miles, and our boats, when war was over, were constantly making journeys there. Even in war-time the little harmless craft left each other alone, and, I suspect, carried on a great deal of peaceable and fraudulent trade together. Grandfather had share of a "fishing" boat with one Thomas Gregson of Lydd. When Martha was determined to go, one of our boats was ready to take her to the place from whence she came, or transfer her to a French boat, which would return into its own harbour.* She was carried back to Boulogne and landed. I know the day full well from a document now before me, of which the dismal writing and signing were occasioned by that very landing.

As she stepped out from the pier (a crowd of people, no doubt, tearing the poor wretch's slender luggage from her to carry it to

* There were points for which our boats used to make, and meet the French boats when not disturbed, and do a good deal more business than I could then understand.—D. D.

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the *Customs*) almost the first person on whom the woman's eyes fell was her master the Count de Saverne. He had actually only reached the place on that very day, and walked the pier, looking towards England, as many a man has done from the same spot, when he saw the servant of his own wife come up the side of the pier.

He rushed to her, as she started back screaming and almost fainting, but the crowd of beggars behind her prevented her retreat. "The child—does the child live?" asked the poor Count, in the German tongue, which both spoke.

The child was well. Thank God, thank God! The poor father's heart was freed *that* terror, then! I can fancy the gentleman saying, "Your mistress is at Winchelsea, with her foster-sister?"

"Yes, Monsieur le Comte."

"The Chevalier de la Motte is always at Winchelsea?"

"Ye—oh, no, no, Monsieur le Comte!"

"Silence, liar! He made the journey with her. They stopped at the same inns. Monsieur le Brun, merchant, aged 34; his sister, Madame Dubois, aged 24, with a female infant in her arms, and a maid, left this port, on 20th April, in the English fishing-boat *Mary*, of Rye. Before embarking they slept at the 'Ecu de France.' I knew I should find them."

"By all that is sacred, I never left Madame once during the voyage!"

"Never till to-day? Enough. How was the fishing-boat called which brought you to Boulogne?"

One of the boat's crew was actually walking behind the unhappy gentleman at the time, with some packet which Martha had left in it.* It seemed as if Fate was determined upon suddenly and swiftly bringing the criminal to justice, and under the avenging sword of the friend he had betrayed. He bade the man follow him to the hotel. There should be a good drink-money for him.

"Does he treat her well?" asked the poor gentleman, as he and the maid walked on.

"Dame! No mother can be more gentle than he is with her!" Where Martha erred was in not saying that her mistress was utterly deprived of reason, and had been so almost since the child's birth. She owned that she had attended her lady to the cathedral when the Countess and the infant were christened, and that Monsieur de la Motte was also present. "He has taken body and soul too," no doubt the miserable gentleman thought.

He happened to alight at the very hotel where the fugitives of

* I had this from the woman herself, whom we saw when we paid our visit to Lorraine and Alsace in 1814.

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whom he was in search had had their quarters four months before (so that for two months at least poor Monsieur de Saverne must have lain ill at Nanci at the commencement of his journey). The boatman, the luggage people, and Martha the servant followed the Count to this hotel; and the femme-de-chambre remembered how Madame Dubois and her brother had been at the hotel—a poor sick lady, who sat up talking the whole night. Her brother slept in the right wing across the court. Monsieur has the lady's room. How that child did cry! See, the windows look on the port. "Yes, this was the lady's room."

"And the child lay on which side?"

"On that side."

Monsieur de Saverne looked at the place which the woman pointed out, stooped his head towards the pillow, and cried as if his heart would break. The fisherman's tears rolled down too over his brown face and hands. *Le pauvre homme, le pauvre homme!*

"Come into my sitting-room with me," he said to the fisherman. The man followed him and shut the door.

His burst of feeling was now over. He became entirely calm.

"You know the house from which this woman came, at Winchelsea, in England?"

"Yes."

"You took a gentleman and a lady thither?"

"Yes."

"You remember the man?"

"Perfectly."

"For thirty louis will you go to sea to-night, take a passenger, and deliver a letter to Monsieur de la Motte?"

The man agreed: and I take out from my secretary that letter, in its tawny ink of fifty years' date, and read it with a strange interest always:—

"*To the Chevalier François Joseph de la Motte, at Winchelsea, in England.*

"I KNEW I should find you. I never doubted where you were. But for a sharp illness which I made at Nanci, I should have been with you two months earlier. After what has occurred between us, I know this invitation will be to you as a command, and that you will hasten as you did to my rescue from the English bayonets at Hastenbeck. Between us, Monsieur le Chevalier, it is to life or death. I depend upon you to communicate this to no one, and to follow the messenger, who will bring you to me.

"COUNT DE SAVERNE."

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This letter was brought to our house one evening as we sat in the front shop. I had the child on my knee, which would have no other playfellow but me. The Countess was pretty quiet that evening—the night calm, and the windows open. Grandfather was reading his book. The Countess and Monsieur de la Motte were at cards, though, poor thing, she could scarce play for ten minutes at a time; and there comes a knock, at which Grandfather puts down his book.*

"All's well," says he. "Entrez. Comment! c'est vous, Bidois?"

"Oui, c'est bien moi, patron!" says Monsieur Bidois, a great fellow, in boots and petticoats, with an eelskin queue hanging down to his heels. "C'est là le petit du pauv' Jean Louis? Est i genti le pti patron!"

And as he looks at me, he rubs a hand across his nose.

At this moment Madame la Comtesse gave one, two, three screams, a laugh, and cries—"Ah, c'est mon mari qui revient de la guerre. Il est là—à la croisée. Bon jour, Monsieur le Comte! Bon jour. Vous avez une petite fille bien laide, bien laide, que je n'aime pas du tout, pas du tout, pas du tout! He is there! I saw him at the window. There! there! Hide me from him! He will kill me, he will kill me!" she cried.

"Calmez-vous, Clarisse," says the Chevalier, who was weary, no doubt, of the poor lady's endless outcries and follies.

"Calmez-vous, ma fille!" sings out Mother, from the inner room, where she was washing.

"Ah, Monsieur is the Chevalier de la Motte?" says Bidois.

"Après, Monsieur?" says the Chevalier, looking haughtily up from the cards.

"In that case, I have a letter for Monsieur le Chevalier." And the sailor handed to the Chevalier de la Motte that letter which I have translated, the ink of which was black and wet then, though now it is sere and faded.

This Chevalier had faced death and danger in a score of dare-devil expeditions. At the game of steel and lead there was no cooler performer. He put the letter which he had received quietly into his pocket, finished his game with the Countess, and telling Bidois to follow him to his lodgings, took leave of the company. I daresay the poor Countess built up a house with the cards, and took little more notice. Mother, going to close the shutters, said, "It was droll, that little man, the friend to Bidois, was still standing in the street." You see we had all sorts of droll friends.

* There was a particular knock, as I learned later, in use among Grandpapa's private friends, and Monsieur Bidois no doubt had this signal.

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Seafaring men, speaking a jargon of English, French, Dutch, were constantly dropping in upon us. Dear Heaven! when I think in what a company I have lived, and what a *galère* I rowed in, is it not a wonder that I did not finish where some of my friends did?

I made a *drole de métier* at this time. I was set by Grandfather to learn his business. Our apprentice taught me the commencement of the noble art of wig-weaving. As soon as I was tall enough to stand to a gentleman's nose I was promised to be *promoted* to be a shaver. I trotted on Mother's errands with her bandboxes, and what not; and I was made dry-nurse to poor Madame's baby, who, as I said, loved me most of all in the house; and who would put her little dimpled hands out and crow with delight to see me. The first day I went out with this little baby in a little wheel-chair Mother got for her, the town boys made rare fun of me: and I had to fight one, as poor little Agnes sat sucking her little thumb in her chair, I suppose; and whilst the battle was going on, who should come up but Doctor Barnard, the English rector of Saint Philip's, who lent us French Protestants the nave of his church for our service, whilst our tumbledown old church was being mended. Doctor Barnard (for a reason which I did not know at that time, but which I am compelled to own now was a good one) did not like Grandfather, nor Mother, nor our family. You may be sure our people abused him in return. He was called a haughty priest—a vilain beeg-veeg, Mother used to say, in her French-English. And perhaps one of the causes of her dislike to him was, that his *big vig*—a fine cauliflower it was—was powdered at another barber's. Well, whilst the battle royal was going on between me and Tom Caffin (dear heart! how well I remember the fellow, though—let me see—it is fifty-four years since we punched each other's little noses), Doctor Barnard walks up to us boys and stops the fighting. "You little rogues! I'll have you all put in the stocks and whipped by my beadle," says the Doctor, who was a magistrate too: "as for this little French barber, he is always in mischief."

"They laughed at me and called me Dry-nurse, and wanted to upset the little cart, sir, and I wouldn't bear it. And it's my duty to protect a poor child that can't help itself," said I, very stoutly. "Her mother is ill. Her nurse has run away, and she has nobody—nobody to protect her but me—and 'Notre Père qui est aux cieux;'" and I held up my little hand as Grandfather used to do; "and if those boys hurt the child I *will* fight for her."

The Doctor rubbed his hand across his eyes; and he felt in his pocket and gave me a dollar.

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"And come to see us all at the Rectory, child," Mrs. Barnard says, who was with the Doctor; and she looked at the little baby that was in its cot, and said, "Poor thing, poor thing!"

And the Doctor, turning round to the English boys, still holding me by the hand, said, "Mind, all you boys! If I hear of you being such cowards again as to strike this little lad for doing his duty, I will have you whipped by my beadle, as sure as my name is Thomas Barnard. Shake hands, you Thomas Caffin, with the French boy;" and I said, "I would shake hands or fight it out whenever Tom Caffin liked;" and so took my place as pony again, and pulled my little cart down Sandgate.

These stories got about amongst the townspeople, and fishermen, and seafaring folk, I suppose, and the people of our little circle; and they were the means, God help me, of bringing me in those very early days a *legacy* which I have still. You see, the day after Bidois, the French fisherman, paid us a visit, as I was pulling my little cart up the hill to a little farmer's house where Grandfather and a partner of his had some pigeons, of which I was very fond as a boy, I met a little dark man whose face I cannot at all recall to my mind, but who spoke French and German to me like Grandfather and Mother. "That is the child of Madame von Zabern?" says he, trembling very much.

"Ja, Herr!" says the little boy. . . . .

O Agnes, Agnes! How the years roll away! What strange events have befallen us: what passionate griefs have we had to suffer: what a merciful Heaven has protected us, since that day when your father knelt over the little car, in which his child lay sleeping! I have the picture in my mind now. I see a winding road leading down to one of the gates of our town; the blue marsh-land, and yonder, across the marsh, Rye towers and gables; a great silver sea stretching beyond; and that dark man's figure stooping and looking at the child asleep. He never kissed the infant or touched her. I remember it woke smiling, and held out its little arms, and he turned away with a sort of groan.

Bidois, the French fisherman I spoke of as having been to see us on the night before, came up here with another companion, an Englishman I think.

"Ah! we seek for you everywhere, Monsieur le Comte," says he. "The tide serves and it is full time."

"Monsieur le Chevalier is on board?" says the Count de Saverne.

"Il est bien là," says the fisherman. And they went down the hill through the gate, without turning to look back.

Mother was quite quiet and gentle all that day. It seemed

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as if something scared her. The poor Countess prattled and laughed, or cried in her unconscious way. But Grandfather at evening prayer that night making the exposition rather long, Mother stamped her foot, and said, "Assez bavardé comme ça, mon père," and sank back in her chair with her apron over her face.

She remained all next day very silent, crying often, and reading in our great German Bible. She was kind to me that day. I remember her saying, in her deep voice, "Thou art a brave boy, Denikin." It was seldom she patted my head so softly. That night our patient was very wild; and laughing a great deal, and singing so that the people would stop in the streets to listen.

Doctor Barnard again met me that day dragging my little carriage, and he fetched me into the Rectory for the first time, and gave me cake and wine, and the book of the "Arabian Nights," and the ladies admired the little baby, and said it was a pity it was a little Papist, and the Doctor hoped *I* was not going to turn Papist, and I said, "Oh, never." Neither Mother nor I liked that darkling Roman Catholic clergyman who was fetched over from our neighbours at the Priory by Monsieur de la Motte. The Chevalier was very firm himself in that religion. I little thought then that I was to see him on a day when his courage and his faith were both to have an awful trial.

. . . I was reading then in this fine book of Monsieur Galland which the Doctor had given me. I had no orders to go to bed, strange to say, and I daresay was peeping into the cave of the Forty Thieves along with Master Ali Baba, when I heard the clock whirring previously to striking twelve, and steps coming rapidly up our empty street.

Mother started up, looking quite haggard, and undid the bolt of the door.

"C'est lui!" says she, with her eyes starting, and the Chevalier de la Motte came in, looking as white as a corpse.

Poor Madame de Saverne upstairs, awakened by the striking clock perhaps, began to sing overhead, and the Chevalier gave a great start, looking more ghastly than before, as my mother with an awful face looked at him.

"Il l'a voulu," says Monsieur de la Motte, hanging down his head; and again poor Madame's crazy voice began to sing.

REPORT

"On the 27th June of this year, 1769, the Comte de Saverne arrived at Boulogne-sur-Mer, and lodged at the Ecu de France, where also was staying Monsieur le Marquis du Quesne Menneville,

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Chef d'Escadre of the Naval Armies of his Majesty. The Comte de Saverne was previously unknown to the Marquis du Quesne, but recalling to Monsieur du Quesne's remembrance the fact that his illustrious ancestor the Admiral du Quesne professed the Reformed religion, as did Monsieur de Saverne himself, Monsieur de Saverne entreated the Marquis du Quesne to be his friend in a rencontre which deplorable circumstances rendered unavoidable.

"At the same time, Monsieur de Saverne stated to Monsieur le Marquis du Quesne the causes of his quarrel with the Chevalier Francis Joseph de la Motte, late officer of the regiment of Soubise, at present residing in England in the town of Winchelsea, in the county of Sussex. The statement made by the Comte de Saverne was such as to convince Monsieur du Quesne of the Count's right to exact a reparation from the Chevalier de la Motte.

"A boat was despatched on the night of the 29th June, with a messenger bearing the note of Monsieur le Comte de Saverne. And in this boat Monsieur de la Motte returned from England.

"The undersigned Comte de Bérigny, in garrison at Boulogne, and an acquaintance of Monsieur de la Motte, consented to serve as his witness in the meeting with Monsieur de Saverne.

"The meeting took place at seven o'clock in the morning, on the sands at half a league from the port of Boulogne: and the weapons chosen were pistols. Both gentlemen were perfectly calm and collected, as one might expect from officers distinguished in the King's service, who had faced the enemies of France as comrades together.

"Before firing, Monsieur le Chevalier de la Motte advanced four steps, and holding his pistol down, and laying his hand on his heart, he said,—'I swear on the faith of a Christian, and the honour of a gentleman, that I am innocent of the charge laid against me by Monsieur de Saverne.'

"The Comte de Saverne said,—'Monsieur le Chevalier de la Motte, I have made no charge; and if I had, a lie costs you nothing.'

"Monsieur de la Motte, saluting the witnesses courteously, and with grief rather than anger visible upon his countenance, returned to his line on the sand which was marked out as the place where he was to stand, at a distance of ten paces from his adversary.

"At the signal being given both fired simultaneously. The ball of Monsieur de Saverne grazed Monsieur de la Motte's side curl, while his ball struck Monsieur de Saverne in the right breast. Monsieur de Saverne stood a moment, and fell.

"The seconds, the surgeon, and Monsieur de la Motte advanced towards the fallen gentleman; and Monsieur de la Motte, holding

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up his hand, again said,—'I take Heaven to witness the person is innocent.'

"The Comte de Saverne seemed to be about to speak. He lifted himself from the sand, supporting himself on one arm: but all he said was,—'You, you——' and a great issue of blood rushed from his throat, and he fell back, and, with a few convulsions, died.

(Signed) "MARQUIS DU QUESNE MENNEVILLE,
"Chef d'Escadre aux Armées Navales du Roy.

"COMTE DE BÉRIGNY,
"Brigadier de Cavalerie."

SURGEON'S REPORT

"I, JEAN BATISTE DROUOT, Surgeon-Major of the Regiment Royal Cravate, in garrison at Boulogne-sur-Mer, certify that I was present at the meeting which ended so lamentably. The death of the gentleman who succumbed was immediate; the ball, passing to the right of the middle of the breastbone, penetrated the lung and the large artery supplying it with blood, and caused death by immediate suffocation."

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CHAPTER IV

OUT OF THE DEPTHS

THAT last night which he was to pass upon earth, Monsieur de Saverne spent in a little tavern in Winchelsea, frequented by fishing people, and known to Bidois, who, even during the war, was in the constant habit of coming to England upon errands in which Monsieur Grandpapa was very much interested—precentor, elder, perruquier as he was.

The Count de Saverne had had some talk with the fishermen during the voyage from Boulogne, and more conversation took place on this last night, when the Count took Bidois partly into his confidence: and, without mentioning the precise cause of his quarrel with Monsieur de la Motte, said that it was inevitable; that the man was a villain who ought not to be allowed to pollute the earth; and that no criminal was ever more righteously executed than this Chevalier would be on the morrow, when it was agreed that the two were to meet.

The meeting would have taken place on that very night, but Monsieur de la Motte demanded, as indeed he had a right to do, some hours for the settlement of his own affairs; and preferred to fight on French ground rather than English, as the survivor of the quarrel would be likely to meet with very rough treatment in this country.

La Motte betook himself then to arranging his papers. As for the Count de Saverne, he said all his dispositions were made. A dowry—that which his wife brought—would go to her child. His own property was devised to his own relations, and he could give the child nothing. He had only a few pieces in his purse, and, "*Tenez*," says he, "this watch. Should anything befall me, I desire it may be given to the little boy who saved my—that is, her child." And the voice of Monsieur le Comte broke as he said these words, and the tears ran over his fingers. And the seaman wept too, as he told the story to me, years after, nor were some of mine wanting, I think, for that poor, heart-broken, wretched man, writhing in helpless agony, as the hungry sand drank his blood. Assuredly, the guilt of that blood was on thy head, Francis de la Motte.

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The watch is ticking on the table before me as I write. It has been my companion for half a century. I remember my childish delight when Bidois brought it to me, and told my mother the tale of the meeting of the two gentlemen.

"You see her condition," Monsieur de la Motte said to my mother at this time. "We are separated for ever, as hopelessly as though one or other were dead. My hand slew her husband. Perhaps my fault destroyed her reason. I transmit misfortunes to those I love and would serve. Shall I marry her? I will if you think I can serve her. As long as a guinea remains to me, I will halve it with her. I have but very few left now. My fortune has crumbled under my hands as have my friendships, my once bright prospects, my ambitions. I am a doomed man. Somehow, I drag down those who love me into my doom."

And so indeed there was a *Cain mark*, as it were, on this unhappy man. He *did* bring wreck and ruin on those who loved him. He was as a lost soul, I somehow think, whose tortures had begun already. Predestined to evil, to crime, to gloom; but now and again some one took pity upon this poor wretch, and amongst those who pitied him was my stern mother.

And here I may relate how it happened that I "saved" the child, for which act poor Monsieur de Saverne rewarded me. Bidois no doubt told that story to Monsieur le Comte in the course of their gloomy voyage. Mrs. Martha, the Countess's attendant, had received or taken leave of absence one night, after putting the child and the poor lady, who was no better than a child, to bed. I went to my bed, and to sleep as boys sleep; and I forget what business called away my mother likewise; but when she came back to look for her poor Biche and the infant in its cradle—both were gone.

I have seen the incomparable Siddons in the play, as, white and terrified, she passed through the darkened hall after King Duncan's murder. My mother's face wore a look of terror to the full as tragical when, starting up from my boyish sleep, I sat up in my bed and saw her. She was almost beside herself with terror. The poor insane lady and her child were gone—who could say where? Into the marshes—into the sea—into the darkness—it was impossible to say whither the Countess had fled.

"We must get up, my boy, and find them," says Mother, in a hoarse voice; and I was sent over to Mr. Bliss's the grocer, in East Street, where the Chevalier lived, and where I found him sitting (with two priests, by the way, guests, no doubt, of Mr. Weston, at the Priory), and all these, and Mother, on her side, with me following her, went out to look for the fugitives.

We went by pairs, taking different roads. Mother's was the

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right one as it appeared, for we had not walked many minutes, when we saw a white figure coming towards us, glimmering out of the dark, and heard a voice singing.

"Ah, mon Dieu!" says Mother, and "Gott sey Dank!" and I know not what exclamations of gratitude and relief. It was the voice of the Countess.

As we came up, she knew us with our light, and began to imitate, in her crazy way, the cry of the watchman, whom the poor sleepless soul had often heard under the windows. "Past twelve o'clock, a starlight night!" she sang, and gave one of her sad laughs.

When we came up to her, we found her in a white wrapper, her hair flowing down her back and over her poor pale face, and again she sang, "Past twelve o'clock."

The child was not with her. Mother trembled in every limb. The lantern shook so in her hand I thought she would drop it.

She put it down on the ground. She took her shawl off her back and covered the poor lady with it, who smiled in her childish way, and said, "C'est bon; c'est chaud ça; ah! que c'est bien!"

As I chanced to look down at the lady's feet, I saw one of them was naked. Mother, herself in a dreadful agitation, embraced and soothed Madame de Saverne. "Tell me, my angel, tell me, my love, where is the child?" says Mother, almost fainting.

"The child! what child? That little brat who always cries? I know nothing about children," says the poor thing. "Take me to my bed this moment, madam! How dare you bring me into the streets with naked feet?"

"Where have you been walking, my dear?" says poor Mother, trying to soothe her.

"I have been to Great Saverne. I wore a domino. I knew the coachman quite well, though he was muffled up all but his nose. I was presented to Monseigneur the Cardinal. I made him such a curtsey—like this. Oh, my foot hurts me!"

She often rambled about this ball and play, and hummed snatches of tunes and little phrases of dialogue, which she may have heard there. Indeed, I believe it was the only play and ball the poor thing ever saw in her life; her brief life, her wretched life. 'Tis pitiful to think how unhappy it was. When I recall it, it tears my heart-strings somehow, as it doth to see a child in pain.

As she held up the poor bleeding foot, I saw that the edge of her dress was all wet, and covered *with sand.*

"Mother, mother!" said I, "she has been to the sea!"

"Have you been to the sea, Clarisse?" asks mother.

"J'ai été au bal: j'ai dansé; j'ai chanté. J'ai bien reconnu

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mon cocher. J'ai été au bal chez le Cardinal. But you must not tell Monsieur de Saverne. Oh, no, you mustn't tell him!"

A sudden thought came to me. And, whenever I remember it, my heart is full of thankfulness to the gracious Giver of all good thoughts. Madame, of whom I was not afraid, and who sometimes was amused by my prattle, would now and then take a walk accompanied by Martha, her maid, who held the infant, and myself, who liked to draw it in its little carriage. We used to walk down to the shore, and there was a rock there on which the poor lady would sit for hours.

"You take her home, Mother," says I, all in a tremble. "You give me the lantern, and I'll go—I'll go"—I was off before I said where. Down I went, through Westgate; down I ran along the road towards the place I guessed at. When I had gone a few hundred yards, I saw in the road something white. It was *the Countess's slipper*, that she had left there. I knew she had gone that way.

I got down to the shore, running, running with all my little might. The moon had risen by this time, shining gloriously over a great silver sea. A tide of silver was pouring in over the sand. Yonder was that rock where we often had sat. The infant was sleeping on it under the stars unconscious. He, who loves little children, had watched over it. . . . I scarce can see the words as I write them down. My little baby was waking. She had known nothing of the awful sea coming nearer with each wave; but she knew me as I came, and smiled, and warbled a little infant welcome. I took her up in my arms, and trotted home with my pretty burden. As I paced up the hill, Monsieur de la Motte and one of the French clergymen met me. By ones and twos, the other searchers after my little wanderer came home from their quest. She was laid in her little crib, and never knew, until years later, the danger from which she had been rescued.

My adventures became known in our town, and I made some acquaintances who were very kind to me, and were the means of advancing me in after-life. I was too young to understand much what was happening round about me; but now, if the truth must be told, I must confess that old Grandfather, besides his business of perruquier, which you will say is no very magnificent trade, followed others which were far less reputable. What do you say, for instance, of a church elder, who lends money *à la petite semaine*, and at great interest? The fishermen, the market-people, nay, one or two farmers and gentlemen round about, were beholden to Grandfather for supplies, and they came to him, to be *shaved* in more ways than one. No good came out of his gains, as I shall presently

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tell: but meanwhile his hands were for ever stretched out to claw other folks' money towards himself; and it must be owned that *Madame sa bru* loved a purse too, and was by no means scrupulous as to the way of filling it. Monsieur le Chevalier de la Motte was free handed and grand in his manner. He paid a pension, I know not how much, for the maintenance of poor Madame de Saverne. He had brought her to the strait in which she was, poor thing! Had he not worked on her, she never would have left her religion: she never would have fled from her husband: that fatal duel would never have occurred: right or wrong, he was the cause of her calamity, and he would make it as light as it might be. I know how, for years, extravagant and embarrassed as he was, he yet supplied means for handsomely maintaining the little Agnes when she was presently left an orphan in the world, when mother and father both were dead, and her relatives at home disowned her.

The ladies of Barr, Agnes's aunts, totally denied that the infant was their brother's child, and refused any contribution towards her maintenance. Her mother's family equally disavowed her. They had been taught the same story, and I suppose we believe willingly enough what we wish to believe. The poor lady was guilty. Her child had been born in her husband's absence. When his return was announced, she fled from her home, not daring to face him; and the unhappy Count de Saverne died by the pistol of the man who had already robbed him of his honour. La Motte had to bear this obloquy, or only protest against it by letters from England. He could not go over to Lorraine, where he was plunged in debt. "At least, Duval," said he to me, when I shook hands with him, and with all my heart forgave him, "mad, and reckless as I have been, and fatal to all whom I loved, I have never allowed the child to want, and have supported her in comfort, when I was myself almost without a meal." A bad man no doubt this was; and yet not utterly wicked: a great criminal who paid an awful penalty. Let us be humble, who have erred too; and thankful, if we have a hope that we have found mercy.

I believe it was some braggart letter, which La Motte wrote to a comrade in Monsieur de Vaux's camp, and in which he boasted of making the conversion of a *petite Protestante* at Strasbourg, which came to the knowledge of poor Monsieur de Saverne, hastened his return home, and brought about this dreadful end. La Motte owned as much, indeed, in the last interview I ever had with him.

Who told Madame de Saverne of her husband's death? It was not for years after that I myself (unlucky chatterbox, whose tongue was always blabbing) knew what had happened. My mother thought that she must have overheard Bidois the boatman, who

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told the whole story over his glass of geneva in our parlour. The Countess's chamber was overhead, and the door left open. The poor thing used to be very angry at the notion of a locked door, and since that awful escapade to the sea-shore, my mother slept in her room, or a servant whom she liked pretty well supplied Mother's place.

In her condition the dreadful event affected her but little; and we never knew that she was aware of it until one evening when it happened that a neighbour, one of our French people of Rye, was talking over the tea-table, and telling us of a dreadful thing he had seen on Penenden Heath as he was coming home. He there saw *a woman burned at the stake* for the murder of her husband. The story is in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for the year 1769, and that will settle pretty well the date of the evening when our neighbour related the horrible tale to us.

Poor Madame de Saverne (who had a very grand air, and was perfectly like a lady) said quite simply, "In this case, my good Ursule, I shall be burned too. For you know I was the cause of my husband being killed. Monsieur le Chevalier went and killed him in Corsica." And she looked round with a little smile, and nodded; and arranged her white dress with her slim hot hands.

When the poor thing spoke, the Chevalier sank back as if he had been shot himself.

"Good-night, neighbour Marion," groans Mother; "she is very bad to-night. Come to bed, my dear, come to bed." And the poor thing followed Mother, curtseying very finely to the company, and saying, quite softly, "Oui, oui, oui, they will burn me; they will burn me."

This idea seized upon her mind, and never left it. Madame la Comtesse passed a night of great agitation; talking incessantly. Mother and her maid were up with her all night. All night long we could hear her songs, her screams, her terrible laughter. . . . Oh, pitiful was thy lot in this world, poor guiltless, harmless lady! In thy brief years, how little happiness! For thy marriage portion only gloom, and terror, and submission, and captivity. The awful Will above us ruled it so. Poor frightened spirit! it has woke under serener skies now, and passed out of reach of our terrors, and temptations, and troubles.

At my early age I could only be expected to obey my elders and parents, and to consider all things were right which were done round about me. Mother's cuffs on the head I received without malice, and if the truth must be owned, had not seldom to submit to the *major* operation which my grandfather used to perform with

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a certain rod which he kept in a locked cupboard, and accompany with long wearisome sermons between each cut or two of his favourite instrument. These good people, as I gradually began to learn, bore but an indifferent reputation in the town which they inhabited, and were neither liked by the French of their own colony, nor by the English among whom we dwelt. Of course, being a simple little fellow, I honoured my father and mother as became me—my grandfather and mother, that is—father being dead some years.

Grandfather, I knew, had a share in a fishing-boat, as numbers of people had, both at Rye and Winchelsea. Stokes, our fisherman, took me out once or twice, and I liked the sport very much: but it appeared that I ought to have said nothing about the boat and the fishing—for one night when we pulled out only a short way beyond a rock which we used to call the Bull Rock, from a pair of horns which stuck out of the water, and there were hailed by my old friend Bidois, who had come from Boulogne in his lugger—and then . . . well then, I was going to explain the whole matter artlessly to one of our neighbours who happened to step in to supper, when Grandpapa (who had made a grace of five minutes long before taking the dish-cover off) fetched me a slap across the face which sent me reeling off my perch. And the Chevalier, who was supping with us, only laughed at my misfortune.

This being laughed at somehow affected me more than the blows. I was used to those, from Grandfather and Mother too; but when people once had been kind to me I could not bear a different behaviour from them. And this gentleman certainly was. He improved my French very much, and used to laugh at my blunders and bad pronunciation. He took a good deal of pains with me when I was at home, and made me speak French like a little gentleman.

In a very brief time he learned English himself, with a droll accent to be sure, but so as to express himself quite intelligibly. His headquarters were at Winchelsea, though he would frequently be away at Deal, Dover, Canterbury, even London. He paid Mother a pension for little Agnes, who grew apace, and was the most winning child I ever set eyes on. I remember, as well as yesterday, the black dress which was made for her after her poor mother's death, her pale cheeks, and the great solemn eyes gazing out from under the black curling ringlets which fell over her forehead and face.

Why do I make zig-zag journeys? 'Tis the privilege of old age to be garrulous, and its happiness to remember early days. As I sink back in my arm-chair, safe and sheltered *post tot discrimina*,

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and happier than it has been the lot of most fellow-sinners to be, the past comes back to me—the stormy past, the strange unhappy yet happy past—and I look at it scared and astonished sometimes; as huntsmen look at the gaps and ditches over which they have leapt, and wonder how they are alive.

My good fortune in rescuing that little darling child caused the Chevalier to be very kind to me; and when he was with us, I used to hang on to the skirts of his coat, and prattle for hours together, quite losing all fear of him. Except my kind namesake, the Captain and Admiral, this was the first *gentleman* I ever met in intimacy—a gentleman with many a stain, nay crime to reproach him; but not all lost, I hope and pray. I own to having a kindly feeling towards that fatal man. I see myself a child prattling at his coat-skirts, and trotting along our roads and marshes with him. I see him with his sad pale face—and a kind of *blighting* look he had—looking at that unconscious lady, at that little baby. My friends the Neapolitans would have called his an evil eye, and exorcised it accordingly. A favourite walk we had was to a house about a mile out of Winchelsea, where a grazing farmer lived. My delight then was to see not his cattle, but his pigeons, of which he had a good stock, of croppers, pouters, runts, and turbits; and amongst these I was told there were a sort of pigeons called carriers, which would fly for prodigious distances, returning from the place to which they were taken though it were ever so distant, to that where they lived and were bred.

Whilst I was at Mr. Perreau's, one of these pigeons actually came in flying from the sea, as it appeared to me: and Perreau looked at it, and fondled it, and said to the Chevalier, "There is nothing. It is to be at the old place." On which Monsieur le Chevalier only said, "C'est bien;" and as we walked away told me all he knew about pigeons, which I daresay was no great knowledge.

Why did he say there was nothing? I asked in the innocence of my prattle. The Chevalier told me that these birds sometimes brought messages, written on a little paper, and tied under their wings, and that Perreau said there was nothing because there was nothing.

"Oh, then! he sometimes *does* have messages with his birds?"

The Chevalier shrugged his shoulders, and took a great pinch out of his fine snuff-box. "What did Papa Duval do to you the other day when you began to talk too fast?" says he. "Learn to hold thy little tongue, Denis, *mon garçon*. If thou livest a little longer, and tellest all thou seest, the Lord help thee!" And I

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suppose our conversation ended here, and he strode home, and I trotted after him.

I narrate these things occurring in childhood by the help of one or two marks which have been left behind—as the ingenious boy found his way home by the pebbles which he dropped along his line of march. Thus I happen to know the year when poor Madame de Saverne must have been ill, by referring to the date of the execution of the woman whom our neighbour saw burned on Penenden Heath. Was it days, was it weeks after this that Madame de Saverne's illness ended as all our illnesses will end one day?

During the whole course of her illness, whatever its length may have been, those priests from Slindon (or from Mr. Weston's the Popish gentleman's at the Priory) were constantly in our house, and I suppose created a great scandal among the Protestants of the town. Monsieur de la Motte showed an extraordinary zeal in this business; and, sinner as he was, certainly was a most devout sinner, according to his persuasion. I do not remember, or was not cognisant, when the end came; but I remember my astonishment as, passing by her open chamber door, I saw candles lighted before her bed, and some of those clergy watching there, and the Chevalier de la Motte kneeling in the passage in an attitude of deep contrition and grief.

On that last day there was, as it appeared, a great noise and disturbance round our house. The people took offence at the perpetual coming in and out of the priest; and on the very night when the coffin was to be taken from our house, and the clergymen were performing the last services there, the windows of the room, where the poor lady lay, were broken in by a great volley of stones, and a roaring mob shouting, "No Popery! Down with the priests!"

Grandfather lost all courage at these threatening demonstrations, and screamed out at his *bru* for bringing all this persecution and danger upon him. "Silence, misérable!" says she. "Go sit in the back kitchen, and count your money-bags!" *She*, at least, did not lose her courage.

Monsieur de la Motte, though not frightened, was much disturbed. The matter might be very serious. I did not know at the time how furiously angry our townspeople were with my parents for harbouring a Papist. Had they known that the lady was a converted Protestant, they would, doubtless, have been more violent still.

We were in a manner besieged in our house; the garrison being—the two priests in much terror; my grandfather, under the bed for what I know, or somewhere where he would be equally

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serviceable; my mother and the Chevalier, with their wits about them; and little Denis Duval, no doubt very much in the way. When the poor lady died it was thought advisable to send her little girl out of the way; and Mrs. Weston at the Priory took her in, who belonged, as has before been said, to the ancient faith.

We looked out with no little alarm for the time when the hearse should come to take the poor lady's body away; for the people would not leave the street, and barricaded either end of it, having perpetrated no actual violence beyond the smashing of the windows as yet, but ready no doubt for more mischief.

Calling me to him, Monsieur de la Motte said, "Denis, thou rememberest about the carrier pigeon the other day with nothing under his wing?" I remembered, of course.

"Thou shalt be my carrier pigeon. Thou shalt carry no letter, but a message. I can trust thee now with a secret." And I kept it, and will tell it now that the people are quite out of danger from *that* piece of intelligence, as I can promise you.

"You know Mr. Weston's house?" Know the house where Agnes was—the best house in the town? Of course I did. He named eight or ten houses besides Weston's at which I was to go and say, "The mackerel are coming in. Come as many of you as can." And I went to the houses, and said the words; and when the people said "Where?" I said, "Opposite our house," and so went on.

The last and handsomest house (I had never been in it before) was Mr. Weston's, at the Priory: and there I went and called to see him. And I remember Mrs. Weston was walking up and down a gallery over the hall with a little crying child who would not go to sleep.

"Agnes, Agnes!" says I, and that baby was quiet in a minute, smiling, and crowing, and flinging out her arms. Indeed, mine was the first name she could speak.

The gentlemen came out of their parlour, where they were over their pipes, and asked me, surlily enough, what I wanted. I said, "The mackerel are out, and the crews are wanted before Peter Duval's, the barber's." And one of them, with a scowl on his face, and an oath, said they would be there, and shut the door in my face.

As I went away from the Priory, and crossed the churchyard by the Rectory gate, who should come up but Doctor Barnard in his gig, with lamps lighted; and I always saluted him after he had been so kind to me, and had given me the books and the cake. "What," says he, "my little shrimper! Have you fetched any fish off the rocks to-night?"

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"Oh, no, sir!" says I. "I have been taking messages all round."

"And what message, my boy?"

I told him the message about the mackerel, &c.; but added that I must not tell the names, for the Chevalier had desired me not to mention them. And then I went on to tell how there was a great crowd in the street, and that they were breaking windows at our house.

"Breaking windows? What for?" I told him what had happened. "Take Dolly to the stables. Don't say anything to your mistress, Samuel, and come along with me, my little shrimper," says the Doctor. He was a very tall man in a great white wig. I see him now skipping over the tombstones, by the great ivy tower of the church, and so through the churchyard-gate towards our house.

The hearse had arrived by this time. The crowd had increased, and there was much disturbance and agitation. As soon as the hearse came, a yell rose up from the people. "Silence! shame! Hold your tongue! Let the poor woman go in quiet," a few people said. These were the men of the *mackerel fishery;* whom the Weston gentlemen presently joined. But the fishermen were a small crowd; the townspeople were many and very angry. As we passed by the end of Port Street (where our house was) we could see the people crowding at either end of the street, and in the midst the great hearse with its black plumes before our door.

It was impossible that the hearse could pass through the crowd at either end of the street, if the people were determined to bar the way. I went in, as I had come, by the back gate of the garden, where the lane was still quite solitary, Doctor Barnard following me. We were awfully scared as we passed through the back kitchen (where the oven and boiler are) by the sight of an individual who suddenly leapt out of the copper, and who cried out, "O mercy, mercy! save me from the wicked men!" This was my grandpapa, and with all respect for grandpapas (being of their age and standing myself now), I cannot but own that mine on this occasion cut rather a pitiful figure.

"Save my house! Save my property!" shouts my ancestor, and the Doctor turns away from him scornfully, and passes on.

In the passage out of this back kitchen we met Monsieur de la Motte, who says, "Ah, c'est toi, mon garçon! Thou hast been on thy errands? Our people are well there?" and he makes a bow to the Doctor, who came in with me, and who replied by a salutation equally stiff. Monsieur de la Motte, reconnoitring from the upper room, had, no doubt, seen his people arrive. As I looked towards

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him I remarked that he was armed. He had a belt with pistols in it, and a sword by his side.

In the back room were the two Roman Catholic clergymen, and four men who had come with the hearse. They had been fiercely assailed as they entered the house with curses, shouts, hustling, and I believe even sticks and stones. My mother was serving them with brandy when we came in. She was astonished when she saw the Rector make his appearance in our house. There was no love between his Reverence and our family.

He made a very grand obeisance to the Roman Catholic clergymen. "Gentlemen," said he, "as rector of this parish, and magistrate of the county, I have come to keep the peace, and if there is any danger, to share it with you. The lady will be buried in the old churchyard, I hear. Mr. Trestles, are you ready to move?"

The men said they would be prepared immediately, and went to bring down their melancholy burden. "Open the door, you!" says the Doctor. The people within shrank back. "*I* will do it," says Mother.

"Et moi, parbleu!" says the Chevalier advancing, his hand on his hilt.

"I think, sir, I shall be more serviceable than you," says the Doctor, very coldly. "If these gentlemen my *confrères* are ready, we will go out; I will go first, as rector of this parish." And Mother drew the bolts, and he walked out and took off his hat.

A Babel roar of yells, shouts, curses came pouring into the hall as the door opened, and the Doctor remained on the steps, bareheaded and undaunted.

"How many of my parishioners are here? Stand aside all who come to my church!" he called out very bold.

At this arose immense roars of "No Popery! down with the priests! down with them! drown them!" and I know not what more words of hatred and menace.

"You men of the French church," shouted out the Doctor, "are you here?"

"We are here! Down with Popery!" roar the Frenchmen.

"Because you were persecuted a hundred years ago, you want to persecute in your turn. Is that what your Bible teaches you? Mine doesn't. When your church wanted repair, I gave you my nave, where you had your service, and were welcome. Is this the way you repay kindness which has been shown to you, you who ought to know better? For shame on you! I say, for shame! Don't try and frighten *me*. Roger Hooker, I know you, you poaching vagabond! Who kept your wife and children when you were at Lewes Gaol? How dare *you* be persecuting anybody

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Thomas Flint? As sure as my name is Barnard, if you stop this procession, I will commit you to-morrow."

Here was a cry of "Huzzay for the Doctor! huzzay for the Rector!" which I am afraid came from the *mackerels*, who were assembled by this time, and were *not* mum, as fish generally are.

"Now, gentlemen, advance, if you please!" This he said to the two foreign clergymen, who came forward courageously enough, the Chevalier de la Motte walking behind them. "Listen, you friends and parishioners, Churchmen and Dissenters! These two foreign dissenting clergymen are going to bury, in a neighbouring churchyard, a departed sister, as you foreign dissenters have buried your own dead without harm or hindrance; and I will accompany these gentlemen to the grave prepared for the deceased lady, and I will see her laid in peace there, as surely as I hope myself to lie in peace."

Here the people shouted; but it was with admiration for the Rector. There was no outcry any more. The little procession fell into an orderly rank, passed through the streets, and round the Protestant church to the old burying-ground behind the house of the Priory. The Rector walked between the two Roman Catholic clergymen. I imagine the scene before me now—the tramp of the people, the flicker of a torch or two; and then we go in at the gate of the Priory ground into the old graveyard of the monastery, where a grave had been dug, on which the stone still tells that Clarissa, born De Viomesnil, and widow of Francis Stanislas Count of Saverne and Barr in Lorraine, lies buried beneath.

When the service was ended, the Chevalier de la Motte (by whose side I stood, holding by his cloak) came up to the Doctor. "Monsieur le Docteur," says he, "you have acted like a gallant man; you have prevented bloodshed——"

"I am fortunate, sir," says the Doctor.

"You have saved the lives of these two worthy ecclesiastics, and rescued from insult the remains of one——"

"Of whom I know the sad history," says the Doctor, very gravely.

"I am not rich, but will you permit me to give this purse for your poor?"

"Sir, it is my duty to accept it," replied the Doctor. The purse contained a hundred louis, as he afterwards told me.

"And may I ask to take your hand, sir?" cries the poor Chevalier, clasping his own together.

"No, sir!" said the Doctor, putting his own hands behind his back. "Your hands have that on them which the gift of a few

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guineas cannot wash away." The Doctor spoke very good French. "My child, good-night; and the best thing I can wish thee is to wish thee out of the hands of that man."

"Monsieur!" says the Chevalier, laying his hand on his sword mechanically.

"I think, sir, the last time it was with the pistol you showed your skill!" says Doctor Barnard, and went in at his own wicket as he spoke, leaving poor La Motte like a man who has just been struck with a blow; and then he fell to weeping and crying that the curse—the curse of Cain was upon him.

"My good boy," the old Rector said to me in after days, while talking over these adventures, "thy friend the Chevalier was the most infernal scoundrel I ever set eyes on, and I never looked at his foot without expecting to see it was cloven."

"And could he tell me anything about the poor Countess?" I asked. He knew nothing. He saw her but once, he thought. "And faith," says he, with an arch look, "it so happened that I was not too intimate with your *own* worthy family."

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CHAPTER V

I HEAR THE SOUND OF BOW BELLS

WHATEVER may have been the Rector's dislike to my parents, in respect of us juniors and my dear little Agnes de Saverne he had no such prejudices, and both of us were great favourites with him. He considered himself to be a man entirely without prejudices; and towards Roman Catholics he certainly was most liberal. He sent his wife to see Mrs. Weston, and an acquaintance was made between the families, who had scarcely known each other before. Little Agnes was constantly with these Westons, with whom the Chevalier de la Motte also became intimate. Indeed, we have seen that he must have known them already, when he sent me on the famous "mackerel" message which brought together a score at least of townspeople. I remember Mrs. Weston as a frightened-looking woman, who seemed as if she had a ghost constantly before her. Frightened, however, or not, she was always kind to my little Agnes.

The younger of the Weston brothers (he who swore at me the night of the burial) was a red-eyed, pimple-faced, cock-fighting gentleman for ever on the trot, and known, I daresay not very favourably, all the country round. They were said to be gentlemen of good private means. They lived in a pretty genteel way, with a post-chaise for the lady, and excellent nags to ride. They saw very little company; but this may have been because they were Roman Catholics, of whom there were not many in the county, except at Arundel and Slindon, where the lords and ladies were of too great quality to associate with a pair of mere fox-hunting, horse-dealing squires. Monsieur de la Motte, who was quite the fine gentleman, as I have said, associated with these people freely enough: but then he had interests in common with them, which I began to understand when I was some ten or a dozen years old, and used to go to see my little Agnes at the Priory. She was growing apace to be a fine lady. She had dancing-masters, music-masters, language-masters (those foreign *tonsured* gentry who were always about the Priory), and was so tall that Mother talked of putting powder in her

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hair. Ah, belle dame! another hand hath since whitened it, though I love it, ebony or silver!

I continued at Rye School, boarding with Mr. Rudge and his dram-drinking daughter, and got a pretty fair smattering of such learning as was to be had at the school. I had a fancy to go to sea, but Doctor Barnard was strong against that wish of mine: unless indeed I should go out of Rye and Winchelsea altogether—get into a King's ship, and perhaps on the quarter-deck, under the patronage of my friend Sir Peter Denis, who ever continued to be kind to me.

Every Saturday night I trudged home from Rye, as gay as schoolboy could be. After Madame de Saverne's death the Chevalier de la Motte took our lodgings on the first-floor. He was of an active disposition, and found business in plenty to occupy him. He would be absent from his lodgings for weeks and months. He made journeys on horseback into the interior of the country; went to London often; and sometimes abroad with our fishermen's boats. As I have said, he learned our language well, and taught me his. Mother's German was better than her French, and my book for reading the German was Doctor Luther's Bible; indeed, that very volume in which poor Monsieur de Saverne wrote down his prayer for the child whom he was to see only twice in this world.

Though Agnes's little chamber was always ready at our house, where she was treated like a little lady, having a servant specially attached to her, and all the world to spoil her, she passed a great deal of time with Mrs. Weston, of the Priory, who took a great affection for the child even before she lost her own daughter. I have said that good masters were here found for her. She learned to speak English as a native, of course, and French and music from the fathers who always were about the house. Whatever the child's expenses or wants were, Monsieur de la Motte generously defrayed them. After his journeys he would bring her back toys, sweetmeats, knicknacks fit for a little duchess. She lorded it over great and small in the Priory, in the *Perruquery*, as we may call my mother's house, ay, and in the Rectory too, where Doctor and Mrs. Barnard were her very humble servants, like all the rest of us.

And here I may as well tell you that I was made to become a member of the Church of England, because Mother took huff at our French Protestants, who would continue persecuting her for harbouring the Papists, and insisted that between the late poor Countess and the Chevalier there had been an unlawful intimacy. Monsieur

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Borel, our pastor, preached at poor Mother several times, she said. I did not understand his innuendoes, being a simple child, I fear not caring much for sermons in those days. For Grandpapa's I know I did not; he used to give us half-an-hour at morning, and half-an-hour at evening. I could not help thinking of Grandfather skipping out of the copper, and calling on us to spare his life on the day of the funeral; and his preaching went in at one ear and out at t'other. One day—*à propos* of some pomatum which a customer wanted to buy, and which I knew Mother made with lard and bergamot herself—I heard him tell such a fib to a customer, that somehow I never could respect the old man afterwards. He actually said the pomatum had just come to him from France direct—from the Dauphin's own hairdresser: and our neighbour, I daresay, would have bought it, but I said, "Oh, Grandpapa, you must mean some other pomatum! I saw Mother make this with her own hands." Grandfather actually began to cry when I said this. He said I was being his death. He asked that somebody should fetch him out and hang him that moment. Why is there no bear, says he, to eat that little monster's head off and destroy that prodigy of crime? Nay, I used to think I *was* a monster sometimes: he would go on so fiercely about my wickedness and perverseness.

Doctor Barnard was passing by our pole one day, and our open door, when Grandfather was preaching upon this sin of mine, with a strap in one hand, laying over my shoulders in the intervals of the discourse. Down goes the strap in a minute, as the Doctor's lean figure makes its appearance at the door; and Grandfather begins to smirk and bow, and hope his Reverence was well. My heart was full. I had had sermon in the morning, and sermon at night, and strapping every day that week; and Heaven help me, I loathed that old man, and loathe him still.

"How can I, sir," says I, bursting out into a passion of tears—"How can I honour my grandfather and mother, if Grandfather tells such d—— lies as he does?" And I stamped with my feet, trembling with wrath and indignation at the disgrace put upon me. I then burst out with my story, which there was no controverting; and I will say Grandfather looked at me as if he would kill me; and I ended my tale sobbing at the Doctor's knees.

"Listen, Mr. Duval," says Doctor Barnard, very sternly: "I know a great deal more than you think about you and your doings. My advice to you is to treat this child well, and to leave off some practices which will get you into trouble, as sure as your name is what it is. I know where your pigeons go to, and where they come from. And some day, when I have you in my justice-room, we shall see whether I will show you any more mercy than you

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have shown to this child. I know you to be——" and the Doctor whispered something into Grandfather's ears and stalked away.

Can you guess by what name the Doctor called my grandfather? If he called him hypocrite, *ma foi*, he was not far wrong. But the truth is, he called him smuggler, and that was a name which fitted hundreds of people along our coast, I promise you. At Hythe, at Folkestone, at Dover, Deal, Sandwich, there were scores and scores of these gentry. All the way to London they had depôts, friends, and correspondents. Inland and along the Thames there were battles endless between them and the revenue people. Our friends "the mackerel," who came out at Monsieur de la Motte's summons, of course were of this calling. One day when he came home from one of his expeditions, I remember jumping forward to welcome him, for he was at one time very kind to me, and as I ran into his arms he started back, and shrieked out an oath and a *sacré bleu* or two. He was wounded in the arm. There had been a regular battle at Deal between the dragoons and revenue officers on the one side, and the smugglers and their friends. Cavalry had charged cavalry, and Monsieur de la Motte (his smuggling name, he told me afterwards, was Mr. Paul, or Pole) had fought on the *mackerel* side.

So were my gentlemen at the Priory of the Mackerel party. Why, I could name you great names of merchants and bankers at Canterbury, Dover, Rochester, who were engaged in this traffic. My grandfather, you see, howled with the wolves; but then he used to wear a snug *lamb's skin* over his wolf's hide. Ah, shall I thank Heaven, like the Pharisee, that I am not as those men are? I hope there is no harm in being thankful that I have been brought out of temptation; that I was not made a rogue at a child's age; and that I did not come to the gallows as a man. Such a fate has befallen more than one of the precious friends of my youth, as I shall have to relate in due season.

That habit I had of speaking out everything that was on my mind, brought me, as a child, into innumerable scrapes, but I do thankfully believe has preserved me from still greater. What could you do with a little chatterbox, who, when his grandfather offered to sell a pot of pomatum as your true Pommade de Cythère, must cry out, "No, Grandpapa, Mother made it with marrow and bergamot"? If anything happened which I was not to mention, I was sure to blunder out some account of it. Good Doctor Barnard, and my patron Captain Denis (who was a great friend of our Rector), I suppose used to joke about this propensity of mine, and would laugh for ten minutes together, as I told my stories; and I think the Doctor had a serious conversation with my mother on

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the matter; for she said, "He has reason. The boy shall not go any more. We will try and have *one* honest man in the family."

Go any more *where?* Now I will tell you (and I am much more ashamed of this than of the barber's pole, Monsieur mon fils, that I can promise you). When I was boarding at the grocer's at Rye, I and other boys were constantly down at the water, and we learned to manage a boat pretty early. Rudge did not go out himself, being rheumatic and lazy, but his apprentice would be absent frequently all night; and on more than one occasion I went out as odd boy in the boat to put my hand to anything.

Those pigeons I spoke of anon came from Boulogne. When one arrived he brought a signal that our Boulogne correspondent was on his way, and we might be on the look-out. The French boat would make for a point agreed upon, and we lay off until she came. We took cargo from her: barrels without number, I remember. Once we saw her chased away by a revenue cutter. Once the same ship fired at us. I did not know what the balls were, which splashed close alongside of us; but I remember the apprentice of Rudge's (he used to make love to Miss R., and married her afterwards) singing out, "Lord, have mercy!" in an awful consternation, and the Chevalier crying out, "Hold your tongue, *misérable!* You were never born to be drowned or shot." He had some hesitation about taking me out on this expedition. He was engaged in running smuggled goods, that is the fact; and "smuggler" was the word which Doctor Barnard whispered in my grandfather's ear. If we were hard pressed at certain points which we knew, and could ascertain by cross-bearings which we took, we would sink our kegs till a more convenient time, and then return and drag for them, and bring them up with line and grapnel.

I certainly behaved much better when we were fired at, than that oaf of a Bevil, who lay howling his "Lord have mercy upon us!" at the bottom of the boat; but somehow the Chevalier discouraged my juvenile efforts in the smuggling line, from his fear of that unlucky tongue of mine, which would blab everything I knew. I may have been out *a-fishing* half-a-dozen times in all, but especially after we had been fired at, La Motte was for leaving me at home. My mother was averse, too, to my becoming a seaman (a smuggler) by profession. Her aim was to make a gentleman of me, she said, and I am most unfeignedly thankful to her for her keeping me out of mischief's way. Had I been permitted to herd along with the black sheep, Doctor Barnard would never have been so kind to me as he was; and indeed that good man showed me the greatest favour. When I came home from school he would often

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have me to the Rectory, and hear me my lessons, and he was pleased to say I was a lively boy of good parts.

The Doctor received rents for his college at Oxford, which has considerable property in these parts, and twice a year would go to London and pay the moneys over. In my boyish times these journeys to London were by no means without danger; and if you will take a *Gentleman's Magazine* from the shelf you will find a highway robbery or two in every month's chronicle. We boys at school were never tired of talking of highwaymen and their feats. As I often had to walk over to Rye from home of a night (so as to be in time for early morning school), I must needs buy a little brass-barrelled pistol, with which I practised in secret, and which I had to hide, lest Mother, or Rudge, or the schoolmaster should take it away from me. Once as I was talking with a schoolfellow, and vapouring about what we would do, were we attacked, I fired my pistol, and shot away a piece of his coat. I might have hit his stomach, not his coat—Heaven be good to us!—and this accident made me more careful in the use of my artillery. And now I used to practice with small shot instead of bullets, and pop at sparrows whenever I could get a chance.

At Michaelmas, in the year 1776 (I promise you I remember the year), my dear and kind friend, Doctor Barnard, having to go to London with his rents, proposed to take me to London to see my other patron, Sir Peter Denis, between whom and the Doctor there was a great friendship; and it is to those dear friends that I owe the great good fortune which has befallen me in life. Indeed, when I think of what I might have been, and of what I have escaped, my heart is full of thankfulness for the great mercies which have fallen to my share. Well, at this happy and eventful Michaelmas of 1776, Doctor Barnard says to me, "Denis, my child, if thy mother will grant leave, I have a mind to take thee to see thy godfather, Sir Peter Denis, in London. I am going up with my rents, my neighbour Weston will share the horses with me, and thou shalt see the Tower and Mrs. Salmon's waxwork before thou art a week older."

You may suppose that this proposition made Master Denis Duval jump for joy. Of course I had heard of London all my life, and talked with people who had been there, but that I should go myself to Admiral Sir Peter Denis's house, and see the play, Saint Paul's, and Mrs. Salmon's, here was a height of bliss I never had hoped to attain. I could not sleep for thinking of my pleasure; I had some money, and I promised to buy as many toys for Agnes as the Chevalier used to bring her. My mother said I should go like a gentleman, and turned me out in a red

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waistcoat with plate buttons, a cock to my hat, and ruffles to my shirts. How I counted the hours of the night before our departure! I was up before the dawn packing my little valise. I got my little brass-barrelled pocket-pistol, and I loaded it with shot. I put it away into my breast-pocket; and if we met with a highwayman I promised myself he should have my charge of lead in his face. The Doctor's post-chaise was at his stables not very far from us. The stable lanterns were alight, and Brown, the Doctor's man, cleaning the carriage, when Mr. Denis Duval comes up to the stable door, lugging his portmanteau after him through the twilight. Was ever daylight so long a-coming? Ah! there come the horses at last; the horses from the "King's Head," and old Pascoe, the one-eyed postillion. How well I remember the sound of their hoofs in that silent street! I can tell everything that happened on that day: what we had for dinner—viz., veal cutlets, and French beans, at Maidstone; where we changed horses, and the colour of the horses. "Here, Brown! Here's my portmanteau! I say, where shall I stow it?" My portmanteau was about as large as a good-sized apple-pie. I jump into the carriage and we drive up to the Rectory; and I think the Doctor will never come out. There he is at last: with his mouth full of buttered toast, and I bob my head to him a hundred times out of the chaise window. Then I must jump out, forsooth. "Brown, shall I give you a hand with the luggage?" says I, and I daresay they all laugh. Well, I am so happy that anybody may laugh who likes. The Doctor comes out, his precious box under his arm. I see dear Mrs. Barnard's great cap nodding at us out of the parlour window as we drive away from the Rectory door to stop a hundred yards farther on at the Priory.

There at the parlour window stands my dear little Agnes, in a white frock, in a great cap with a blue riband and bow, and curls clustering over her face. I wish Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted thee in those days, my dear; but thou wert the very image of one of his little ladies, that one who became Duchess of Buccleuch afterwards. There is my Agnes, and now presently comes out Mr. Weston's man and luggage, and it is fixed on the roof. Him, his master, Mr. George Weston, follows. This was the most good-natured of the two, and I shall never forget my sensation of delight, when I saw him bring out two holster-pistols, which he placed each in a pocket of the chaise. Is Tommy Chapman, the apothecary's son of Westgate, alive yet, and does he remember my wagging my head to him as our chaise whirled by? He was shaking a mat at the door of his father's shop as my lordship accompanied by my noble friends passed by.

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First stage, Ham Street, "The Bear." A grey horse and a bay to change, *I* remember them. Second stage, Ashford. Third stage——I think I am asleep about the third stage; and no wonder, a poor little wretch who had been awake half the night before, and no doubt many nights previous, thinking of this wonderful journey. Fourth stage, Maidstone, "The Bell." "And here we will stop to dinner, Master Shrimpcatcher," says the Doctor, and I jump down out of the carriage nothing loth. The Doctor followed with his box, of which he never lost sight.

The Doctor liked his ease in his inn, and took his sip of punch so comfortably, that I, for my part, thought he never would be gone. I was out in the stables and looking at the horses, and talking to the ostler who was rubbing his nags down. I daresay I had a peep into the kitchen, and at the pigeons in the inn yard, and at all things which were to be seen at "The Bell," while my two companions were still at their interminable punch. It was an old-fashioned inn, with a gallery round the courtyard. Heaven bless us! Falstaff and Bardolph may have stopped there on the road to Gadshill. I was in the stable looking at the nags, when Mr. Weston comes out of the inn, looks round the court, opens the door of the post-chaise, takes out his pistols, looks at the priming, and puts them back again. Then we are off again, and time enough too. It seemed to me many hours since we had arrived at that creaking old "Bell." And away we go through Addington, Eynesford, by miles and miles of hop-gardens. I daresay I did not look at the prospect much, beautiful though it might be, my young eyes being for ever on the look-out for Saint Paul's and London.

For a great part of the way Doctor Barnard and his companion had a fine controversy about their respective religions, for which each was alike zealous. Nay: it may be the Rector invited Mr. Weston to take a place in his post-chaise in order to have this battle, for he never tired of arguing the question between the two Churches. Towards the close of the day Master Denis Duval fell asleep on Doctor Barnard's shoulder, and the good-natured clergyman did not disturb him.

I woke up with the sudden stoppage of the carriage. The evening was falling. We were upon a lonely common, and a man on horseback was at the window of the post-chaise.

"Give us out that there box! and your money!" I heard him say in a very gruff voice. O heavens! we were actually stopped by a highwayman! It was delightful.

Mr. Weston jumped at his pistols very quick. "Here's our money, you scoundrel!" says he, and fired point-blank at the rogue's

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head. Confusion! The pistol missed fire. He aimed the second, and again no report followed!

"Some scoundrel has been tampering with these," says Mr. Weston, aghast.

"Come," says Captain Macheath, "come, your——"

But the next word the fellow spoke was a frightful oath; for I took out my little pistol, which was full of shot, and fired it into his face. The man reeled, and I thought would have fallen out of his saddle. The postillion, frightened no doubt, clapped spurs to his horse, and began to gallop. "Shan't we stop and take that rascal, sir?" said I to the Doctor. On which Mr. Weston gave a peevish kind of push at me, and said, "No, no. It is getting quite dark. Let us push on." And, indeed, the highwayman's horse had taken fright, and we could see him galloping away across the common.

I was so elated to think that I, a little boy, had shot a live highwayman, that I daresay I bragged outrageously of my action. We set down Mr. Weston at his inn in the Borough, and crossed London Bridge, and there I was in London at last. Yes, and that was the Monument, and then we came to the Exchange, and yonder, yonder was Saint Paul's. We went up Holborn, and so to Ormond Street, where my patron lived in a noble mansion; and where his wife, my Lady Denis, received me with a great deal of kindness. You may be sure the battle with the highwayman was fought over again, and I got due credit from myself and others for my gallantry.

Sir Peter and his lady introduced me to a number of their acquaintances as the little boy who shot the highwayman. They received a great deal of company, and I was frequently had in to their dessert. I suppose I must own that my home was below in the housekeeper's room with Mrs. Jellicoe; but my Lady took such a fancy to me that she continually had me upstairs, took me out driving in her chariot, or ordered one of the footmen to take me to the sights of the town, and sent me in his charge to the play. It was the last year Garrick performed; and I saw him in the play of "Macbeth," in a gold-laced blue coat with scarlet plush waistcoat and breeches. Ormond Street, Bloomsbury, was on the outskirts of the town then, with open country behind, stretching as far as Hampstead. Bedford House, north of Bloomsbury Square, with splendid gardens, was close by, and Montague House, where I saw stuffed camelopards, and all sorts of queer things from foreign countries. Then there were the Tower, and the Waxwork, and Westminster Abbey, and Vauxhall. What a glorious week of pleasure it was! At the week's end the kind Doctor went home again, and all those dear kind people gave me presents, and cakes, and money, and spoilt the little boy who shot the highwayman.

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The affair was actually put into the newspapers, and who should come to hear of it but my gracious Sovereign himself. One day Sir Peter Denis took me to see Kew Gardens and the new Chinese pagoda her Majesty had put up. Whilst walking here, and surveying this pretty place, I had the good fortune to see his M–j–sty, walking with our most gracious Qu—n, the Pr–nce of W—s, *the Bishop of Osnaburg*, my namesake, and, I think, two, or it may be three, of the Princesses. Her M–j–sty knew Sir Peter from having sailed with him, saluted him very graciously, and engaged him in conversation. And the Best of Monarchs, looking towards his humblest subject and servant, said, "What, what? Little boy shot the highwayman! Shot him in the face! Shot him in the face!" On which the youthful Pr–nces graciously looked towards me, and the King asking Sir Peter what my profession was to be, the Admiral said I hoped to be a sailor and serve his Majesty.

I promise you I was a mighty grand personage when I went home; and both at Rye and Winchelsea scores of people asked me what the King said. On our return, we heard of an accident which had happened to Mr. Joseph Weston, which ended most unhappily for that gentleman. On the very day when we set out for London he went out shooting—a sport of which he was very fond; but in climbing a hedge, and dragging his gun incautiously after him, the lock caught in a twig, and the piece discharged itself into the poor gentleman's face, lodging a number of shot into his left cheek, and into his eye, of which he lost the sight, after suffering much pain and torture.

"Bless my soul! A charge of small shot in his face! What an extraordinary thing!" cries Doctor Barnard, who came down to see Mother and Grandfather the day after our return home. Mrs. Barnard had told him of the accident at supper on the night previous. Had he been shot or shot some one himself, the Doctor could scarce have looked more scared. He put me in mind of Mr. Garrick, whom I had just seen at the playhouse, London, when he comes out after murdering the King.

"You look, Docteur, as if you done it yourself," says Monsieur de la Motte, laughing, and in his English jargon. "Two time, three time, I say, Weston, you shoot yourself, you carry you gun that way, and he say he not born to be shot, and he swear!"

"But, my good Chevalier, Doctor Blades picked some bits of crape out of his eye, and thirteen or fourteen shot. What is the size of your shot, Denny, with which you fired at the highwayman?"

"Quid autem vides festucam in oculo fratris tui, Doctor?" says the Chevalier; "that is good doctrine—Protestant or Popish, eh?"

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On which the Doctor held down his head, and said, "Chevalier, I am corrected; I was wrong—very wrong."

"And as for crape," La Motte resumed, "Weston is in mourning. He go to funeral at Canterbury four days ago. Yes, he tell me so. He and my friend Lütterloh go." This Mr. Lütterloh was a German living near Canterbury, with whom Monsieur de la Motte had dealings. He had dealings with all sorts of people; and very queer dealings, too, as I began to understand now that I was a stout boy approaching fourteen years of age, and standing pretty tall in my shoes.

De la Motte laughed then at the Doctor's suspicions. "Parsons and women all the same, save your respect, ma bonne Madame Duval; all tell tales; all believe evil of their neighbours. I tell you I see Weston shoot twenty, thirty time. Always drag his gun through hedge."

"But the crape——?"

"Bah! Always in mourning, Weston is! For shame of your *cancans*, little Denis! Never think such thing again. Don't make Weston your enemy. If a man say that of me, I would shoot him myself, *parbleu!*"

"But if he has done it?"

"*Parbleu!* I would shoot him so much ze mor!" says the Chevalier, with a stamp of his foot. And the first time he saw me alone he reverted to the subject. "Listen, Denisot!" says he: "thou becomest a great boy. Take my counsel, and hold thy tongue. This suspicion against Mr. Joseph is a monstrous crime, as well as a folly. A man say that of me—right or wrong—I burn him the brain. Once I come home, and you run against me, and I cry out, and swear and pest. I was wounded myself, I deny it not."

"And I said nothing, sir," I interposed.

"No, I do thee justice; thou didst say nothing. You know the *métier* we make sometimes? That night in the boat" ("*zat* night in *ze* boat," he used to say), "when the revenue cutter fire, and your poor camarade howl—ah, how he howl—you don't suppose we were there to look for lobstare-pot, eh? Tu n'as pas bronché, toi. You did not crane; you show yourself a man of heart. And now, petit, apprends à te taire!" And he gave me a shake of the hand, and a couple of guineas in it too, and went off to his stables on his business. He had two or three horses now, and was always on the trot; he was very liberal with his money, and used to have handsome entertainments in his upstairs room, and never quarrelled about the bills which Mother sent in. "Hold thy tongue, Denisot," said he. "Never tell who comes in or who goes out. And mind

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thee, child, if thy tongue wags, little birds come and whisper me, and say, 'He tell.'"

I tried to obey his advice, and to rein in that truant tongue of mine. When Doctor and Mrs. Barnard themselves asked me questions I was mum, and perhaps rather disappointed the good lady and the Rector too by my reticence. For instance, Mrs. Barnard would say, "That was a nice goose I saw going from market to your house, Denny."

"Goose is very nice, ma'am," says I.

"The Chevalier often has dinners?"

"Dines every day, regular, ma'am."

"Sees the Westons a great deal?"

"Yes, ma'am," I say, with an indescribable heart-pang. And the cause of that pang I may as well tell. You see, though I was only thirteen years old, and Agnes but eight, I loved that little maid with all my soul and strength. Boy or man I never loved any other woman. I write these very words by my study fire in Fareport with madam opposite dozing over her novel till the neighbours shall come in to tea and their rubber. When my ink is run out, and my little tale is written, and yonder church that is ringing to seven o'clock prayer shall toll for a certain D. D., you will please, good neighbours, to remember that I never loved any but yonder lady, and keep a place by Darby for Joan, when her turn shall arrive.

Now in the last year or two since she had been adopted at the Priory, Agnes came less and less often to see us. She did not go to church with us, being a Catholic. She learned from the good fathers her tutors. She learned music and French and dancing to perfection. All the country could not show a finer little lady. When she came to our shop, it was indeed a little countess honouring us with a visit. Mother was gentle before her—Grandfather obsequious—I, of course, her most humble little servant. Wednesday (a half-holiday), and half Saturday, and all Sunday I might come home from school, and how I used to trudge, and how I longed to see that little maiden, any gentleman may imagine who has lost his heart to an Agnes of his own.

The first day of my arrival at home, after the memorable London journey, I presented myself at the Priory, with my pocket full of presents for Agnes. The footman let me into the hall civilly enough: but the young lady was out with Mrs. Weston in the post-chaise. I might leave my message.

I wanted to *give* my message. Somehow in that fortnight's absence from home, I had so got to long after Agnes that I never had my little sweetheart quite out of my mind. It may have been

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a silly thing, but I got a little pocket-book and wrote in French a journal of all I saw in London. I daresay there were some petty faults in grammar. I remember a fine paragraph about my meeting the Royal personages at Kew, and all their names written down in order; and this little pocket-book I must needs send to Mademoiselle de Saverne.

The next day I called again. Still Mademoiselle de Saverne was not to be seen: but in the evening a servant brought a little note from her, in which she thanked her dear brother for his beautiful book. That was some consolation. She liked the pocket-book, anyhow. I wonder, can you young people guess what I did to it before I sent it away? Yes, I did. "One, tree, feefty time," as the Chevalier would say. The next morning, quite early, I had to go back to school, having promised the Doctor to work hard after my holiday; and work I did with a will, at my French and my English, and my Navigation. I thought Saturday would never come: but it did at last, and I trotted as quick as legs would carry me from school to Winchelsea. My legs were growing apace now; and especially as they took me homewards, few could outrun them.

All good women are match-makers at heart. My dear Mrs. Barnard saw quite soon what my condition of mind was, and was touched by my boyish fervour. I called once, twice, thrice at the Priory, and never could get a sight of Miss Agnes. The servant used to shrug his shoulders and laugh at me in an insolent way, and the last time said—"You need not call any more. We don't want our hair cut here, nor no pomatum, nor no soap, do you understand that?" and he slammed the door in my face. I was stunned by this insolence, and beside myself with rage and mortification. I went to Mrs. Barnard, and told her what had happened to me. I burst into tears of passion and grief as I flung myself on a sofa by the good lady. I told her how I had rescued little Agnes, how I loved the little thing better than all the world. I spoke my heart out, and eased it somewhat, for the good lady wiped her eyes more than once, and finished by giving me a kiss. She did more; she invited me to tea with her on the next Wednesday when I came home from school, and who should be there but little Agnes. She blushed very much. Then she came towards me. Then she held up her little cheek to be kissed, and then she cried—oh, how she did cry! There were three people whimpering in that room. (How well I recollect it opening into the garden, and the little old blue dragon teacups and silver pot!) There were three persons, I say, crying: a lady of fifty, a boy of thirteen, and a little girl of eight years of age. Can you guess what happened next? Of course the lady of fifty remembered that she had forgotten her spectacles,

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and went upstairs to fetch them; and then the little maiden began to open her heart to me, and told her dear Denny how she had been longing to see him, and how they were very angry with him at the Priory; so angry that his name was never to be spoken. "The Chevalier said that, and so did the gentlemen—especially Mr. Joseph, who had been dreadful since his accident, and one day (says my dear) when you called, he was behind the door with a great horsewhip, and said he would let you in, and flog your soul out of your body, only Mrs. Weston cried, and Mr. George said, 'Don't be a fool, Joe!' But something you have done to Mr. Joseph, dear Denny, and when your name is mentioned, he rages and swears so that it is dreadful to hear him. What can make the gentleman so angry with you?"

"So he actually was waiting with a horsewhip, was he? In that case I know what I would do. I would never go about without my pistol. I have hit one fellow," said I, "and if any other man threatens me I will defend myself."

My dear Agnes said that they were very kind to her at the Priory, although she could not bear Mr. Joseph—that they gave her good masters, that she was to go to a good school kept by a Catholic lady at Arundel. And oh, how she wished her Denny would turn Catholic, and she prayed for him always, always! And for that matter I know some one who never night or morning on his knees has forgotten that little maiden. The father used to come and give her lessons three or four times in the week, and she used to learn her lessons by heart, walking up and down in the great green walk in the kitchen-garden every morning at eleven o'clock. I knew the kitchen-garden! the wall was in North Lane, one of the old walls of the convent: at the end of the green walk there was a pear tree. And that was where she always went to learn her lessons.

And here, I suppose, Mrs. Barnard returned to the room, having found her spectacles. And as I take mine off my nose and shut my eyes, that well-remembered scene of boyhood passes before them —that garden basking in the autumn evening—that little maiden with peachy cheeks, and glistening curls, that dear and kind old lady, who says, "'Tis time now, children, you should go home."

I had to go to school that night; but before I went I ran up North Lane and saw the old wall and the pear tree behind it. And do you know I thought I would try and get up the wall, and easy enough it was to find a footing between those crumbling old stones; and when on the top I could look down from the branches of the tree into the garden below, and see the house at the farther end.

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So that was the broad walk where Agnes learned her lessons? Master Denis Duval pretty soon had that lesson by heart.

Yes: but one day in the Christmas holidays, when there was a bitter frost, and the stones and the wall were so slippery that Mr. D. D. tore his fingers and his small-clothes in climbing to his point of observation, it happened that little Agnes was *not* sitting under the tree learning her lessons, and none but an idiot would have supposed that she would have come out on such a day.

But who should be in the garden, pacing up and down the walk all white with hoar-frost, but Joseph Weston with his patch over his eye. Unluckily he had one eye left with which he saw me, and the next moment I heard the *report* of a tremendous oath, and then a brickbat came whizzing at my head, so close that, had it struck me, it would have knocked out my eye, and my brains too.

I was down the wall in a moment: it was slippery enough; and two or three more brickbats came *à mon adresse*, but luckily failed to hit their mark.

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CHAPTER VI

I ESCAPE FROM A GREAT DANGER

I SPOKE of the affair of the brickbats, at home, to Monsieur de la Motte only, not caring to tell Mother, lest she should be inclined to resume her box-on-the-ear practice, for which I thought I was growing too old. Indeed, I had become a great boy. There were not half-a-dozen out of the sixty at Pocock's who could beat me when I was thirteen years old, and from these champions, were they ever so big, I never would submit to a thrashing, without a fight on my part, in which, though I might get the worst, I was pretty sure to leave some ugly marks on my adversary's nose and eyes. I remember one lad especially, Tom Parrot by name, who was three years older than myself, and whom I could no more beat than a frigate can beat a seventy-four; but we *engaged* nevertheless, and, after we had had some rounds together, Tom put one hand in his pocket, and, with a queer face and a great black eye I had given him, says,—"Well, Denny, I could do it—you know I could: but I'm so lazy, I don't care about going on." And one of the bottle-holders beginning to jeer, Tom fetches him such a rap on the ear, that I promise you he showed no inclination for laughing afterwards. By the way, that knowledge of the noble art of fisticuffs which I learned at school, I had to practise at sea presently, in the cockpit of more than one of his Majesty's ships of war.

In respect of the slapping and caning at home, I think Monsieur de la Motte remonstrated with my mother, and represented to her that I was now too old for that kind of treatment. Indeed, when I was fourteen, I was as tall as Grandfather, and in a tussle I am sure I could have tripped his old heels up easily enough, and got the better of him in five minutes. Do I speak of him with undue familiarity? I pretend no love for him; I never could have any respect. Some of his practices which I knew of made me turn from him, and his loud professions only increased my distrust. *Monsieur mon fils*, if ever you marry, and have a son, I hope the little chap will have an honest man for a grandfather, and that you will be able to say, "I loved him," when the daisies cover me.

La Motte, then, caused "the abolition of torture" in our house,

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and I was grateful to him. I had the queerest feelings towards that man. He was a perfect fine gentleman when he so wished: of his money most liberal, witty (in a dry *cruel* sort of way)—most tenderly attached to Agnes. *Eh bien!* As I looked at his yellow handsome face, cold shudders would come over me, though at this time I did not know that Agnes's father had fallen by his fatal hand.

When I informed him of Mr. Joe Weston's salute of brickbats, he looked very grave. And I told him then, too, a thing which had struck me most forcibly—viz., that the shout which Weston gave, and the oath which he uttered when he saw me on the wall, were precisely like the oath and execration uttered by *the man with the craped face*, at whom I fired from the postchaise.

"*Bah, bêtise!*" says La Motte. "What didst thou on the wall? One does not steal pears at thy age."

I daresay I turned red. "I heard somebody's voice," I said. "In fact, I heard Agnes singing in the garden, and—and I got on the wall to see her."

"What, you—you, a little barber's boy, climb a wall to speak to Mademoiselle Agnes de Saverne, of one of the most noble houses of Lorraine?" La Motte yelled, with a savage laugh. "*Parbleu!* Monsieur Weston has well done!"

"Sir!" said I, in a towering rage, "barber as I am, my fathers were honourable Protestant clergymen in Alsace, and we are as good as highwaymen at any rate! Barber, indeed!" I say again. "And now I am ready to *swear* that the man who swore at me, and the man I shot on the road, are one and the same; and I'll go to Doctor Barnard's, and swear it before him!"

The Chevalier looked aghast, and threatening for awhile. "Tu me menaces, je crois, petit manant!" says he, grinding his teeth. "This is too strong. Listen, Denis Duval! Hold thy tongue, or evil will come to thee. Thou wilt make for thyself enemies the most unscrupulous, and the most terrible—do you hear? I have placed Mademoiselle Agnes de Saverne with that admirable woman, Mistress Weston, because she can meet at the Priory with society more fitting her noble birth than that which she will find under your grandfather's pole—parbleu. Ah, you dare mount on wall to look for Mademoiselle de Saverne? Gare aux manstraps, mon garçon! Vive Dieu, if I see thee on that wall I will fire on thee, moi le premier! *You* pretend to Mademoiselle Agnes. Ha! ha! ha!" and he grinned and looked like that *cloven*-footed gentleman of whom Doctor Barnard talked.

I felt that henceforward there was war between La Motte and me. At this time I had suddenly shot up to be a young man, and

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was not the obedient prattling child of last year. I told Grandfather that I would bear no more punishment, such as the old man had been accustomed to bestow upon me; and once when my mother lifted her hand, I struck it up, and gripped it so tight that I frightened her. From that very day she never raised a hand to me. Nay, I think she was not ill pleased, and soon actually began to spoil me. Nothing was too good for me. I know where the silk came from which made my fine new waistcoat, and the cambric for my ruffled shirts, but very much doubt whether they ever paid any duty. As I walked to church, I daresay I cocked my hat, and strutted very consequentially. When Tom Billis, the baker's boy, jeered at my fine clothes, "Tom," says I, "I will take my coat and waistcoat off for half-an-hour on Monday, and give thee a beating if thou hast a mind; but to-day let us be at peace, and go to church."

On the matter of church I am not going to make any boast. That awful subject lies between a man and his conscience. I have known men of lax faith pure and just in their lives, as I have met very loud-professing Christians loose in their morality, and hard and unjust in their dealings. There was a little old man at home—Heaven help him!—who was of this sort, and who, when I came to know his life, would put me into such a rage of revolt whilst preaching his daily and nightly sermons, that it is a wonder I was not enlisted among the scoffers and evil-doers altogether. I have known many a young man fall away, and become utterly reprobate, because the bond of discipline was tied too tightly upon him, and because he has found the preacher who was perpetually prating over him lax in his own conduct. I am thankful, then, that I had a better instructor than my old grandfather with his strap and his cane; and was brought (I hope and trust) to a right state of thinking by a man whose brain was wise, as his life was excellently benevolent and pure. This was my good friend Doctor Barnard, and to this day I remember the conversations I had with him, and am quite sure they influenced my future life. Had I been altogether reckless and as lawless as many people of our acquaintance and neighbourhood, he would have ceased to feel any interest in me; and instead of wearing his Majesty's epaulets (which I trust I have not disgraced), I might have been swabbing a smuggler's boat, or riding in a night caravan, with kegs beside me and pistols and cutlasses to defend me, as that unlucky La Motte owned for his part that he had done. My good mother, though she gave up the practice of smuggling, never could see the harm in it; but looked on it as a game where you played your stake, and lost or won it. She ceased to play, not because it was

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wrong, but it was expedient no more; and Mr. Denis, her son, was the cause of her giving up this old trade.

For me, I thankfully own that I was taught to see the matter in a graver light, not only by our Doctor's sermons (two or three of which, on the text of "Render unto Cæsar," he preached, to the rage of a great number of his congregation), but by many talks which he had with me; when he showed me that I was in the wrong to break the laws of my country to which I owed obedience, as did every good citizen. He knew (though he never told me, and his reticence in this matter was surely very kind) that my poor father had died of wounds received in a smuggling encounter; but he showed me how such a life must be loose, lawless, secret, and wicked; must bring a man amongst desperate companions, and compel him to resist Cæsar's lawful authority by rebellion, and possibly murder. "To thy mother I have used other arguments, Denny, my boy," he said, very kindly. "I and the Admiral want to make a gentleman of thee. Thy old grandfather is rich enough to help us if he chooses. I won't stop to inquire too strictly where all his money came from;* but 'tis clear we cannot make a gentleman of a smuggler's boy, who may be transported any day, or, in case of armed resistance, may be——" And here my good Doctor puts his hand to his ear, and indicates the punishment for piracy which was very common in my young time. "My Denny does not want to ride with a crape over his face, and fire pistols at revenue officers! No! I pray you will ever show an honest countenance to the world. You will render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and—the rest, my child, you know."

Now, I remarked about this man, that when he approached *a certain subject*, an involuntary awe came over him, and he hushed as it were at the very idea of that sacred theme. It was very different with poor Grandfather prating his sermons (and with some other pastors I have heard), who used this Name as familiarly as any other, and——but who am I to judge? and, my poor old Grandfather, is there any need at this distance of time that I should be picking out the *trabem in oculo tuo*? . . . Howbeit, on that night, as I was walking home after drinking tea with my dear Doctor, I made a vow that I would strive henceforth to lead an honest life; that my tongue should speak the truth, and my hand should be sullied by no secret crime. And as I spoke I saw my dearest little maiden's light glimmering in her chamber, and the stars shining overhead, and felt—who could feel more bold and happy than I?

That walk schoolwards by West Street certainly was a *détour*.

* Eheu! where a part of it *went to*, I shall have to say presently.—D. D.

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I might have gone a straighter road, but then I should not have seen *a certain window:* a little twinkling window in a gable of the Priory House, where the light used to be popped out at nine o'clock. T'other day, when we took over the King of France to Calais (his Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence being in command), I must needs hire a postchaise from Dover, to look at that old window in the Priory House at Winchelsea. I went through the old tears, despairs, tragedies. I sighed as sentimentally, after forty years, as though the *infandi dolores* were fresh upon me, as though I were the schoolboy trudging back to his task, and taking a last look at his dearest joy. I used as a boy to try and pass that window at nine, and I know a prayer was said for the inhabitant of yonder chamber. She knew my holidays, and my hours of going to school and returning thence. If my little maid hung certain signals in that window (such as a flower, for example, to indicate all was well, a cross-curtain, and so forth), I hope she practised no very unjustifiable stratagems. We agreed to consider that she was a prisoner in the hands of the enemy; and we had few means of communication save these simple artifices, which are allowed to be fair in love and war. Monsieur de la Motte continued to live at our house, when his frequent affairs did not call him away thence; but, as I said, few words passed between us after that angry altercation already described, and he and I were never friends again.

He warned me that I had another enemy, and facts strangely confirmed the Chevalier's warning. One Sunday night, as I was going to school, a repetition of the brickbat assault was made upon me, and this time the smart cocked hat which Mother had given me came in for such a battering as effectually spoiled its modish shape. I told Doctor Barnard of this second attempt, and the good Doctor was not a little puzzled. He began to think that he was not so very wrong in espying a beam in Joseph Weston's eye. We agreed to keep the matter quiet, however; and a fortnight after, on another Sunday evening, as I was going on my accustomed route to school, whom should I meet but the Doctor and Mr. Weston walking together! A little way beyond the town gate there is a low wall round a field; and Doctor Barnard, going by this field *a quarter of an hour before my usual time for passing*, found Mr. Joseph Weston walking there behind the stone enclosure!

"Good night, Denny," says the Doctor, when he and his companion met me; but surly Mr. Weston said nothing. "Have you had any more brickbats at your head, my boy?" the Rector continued.

I said I was not afraid. I had got a good pistol, and *a bullet* in it this time.

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"He shot that scoundrel on the same day you were shot, Mr. Weston," says the Doctor.

"Did he?" growls the other.

"And your gun was loaded with the same-sized shot which Denis used to pepper *his* rascal," continues the Doctor. "I wonder if any of the crape went into the rascal's wound?"

"Sir," said Mr. Weston, with an oath, "what do you mean for to hint?"

"The very oath the fellow used whom Denny hit when your brother and I travelled together. I am sorry to hear you use the language of such scoundrels, Mr. Weston."

"If you dare to suspect me of anything unbecoming a gentleman, I'll have the law of you, Mr. Parson, that I will!" roars the other.

"Denis, mon garçon, tire ton pistolet de suite, et vise-moi bien cet homme-là," says the Doctor; and gripping hold of Weston's arm, what does Doctor Barnard do but plunge his hand into Weston's pocket, and draw thence *another* pistol! He said afterwards he saw the brass butt sticking out of Weston's coat, as the two were walking together.

"What!" shrieks Mr. Weston; "is that young miscreant to go about armed, and tell everybody he will murder me; and ain't I for to defend myself? I walk in fear of my life for him!"

"You seem to me to be in the habit of travelling with pistols, Mr. Weston, and you know when people pass sometimes with money in their postchaises."

"You scoundrel, you—you, boy! I call you to witness the words this man have spoken. He have insulted me, and libelled me, and I'll have the *lor* on him as sure as I am born!" shouts the angry man.

"Very good, Mr. Joseph Weston," replied the other fiercely. "And I will ask Mr. Blades, the surgeon, to bring the shot which he took from your eye, and the scraps of crape adhering to your face, and we will go to *lor* as soon as you like!"

Again I thought with a dreadful pang how Agnes was staying in that man's house, and how this quarrel would more than ever divide her from me; for now she would not be allowed to visit the Rectory—the dear neutral ground where I sometimes hoped to see her.

Weston never went to law with the Doctor, as he threatened. Some awkward questions would have been raised, which he would have found a difficulty in answering: and though he averred that his accident took place on the day before our encounter with the *beau masque* on Dartford Common, a little witness on our side

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was ready to aver that Mr. Joe Weston left his house at the Priory before sunrise on the day when we took our journey to London, and that he returned the next morning with his eye bound up, when he sent for Mr. Blades, the surgeon of our town. Being awake, and looking from her window, my witness saw Weston mount his horse by the stable-lantern below, and heard him swear at the groom as he rode out at the gate. Curses used to drop naturally out of this nice gentleman's lips; and it is certain in his case that bad words and bad actions went together.

The Westons were frequently absent from home, as was the Chevalier our lodger. My dear little Agnes was allowed to come and see us at these times; or slipped out by the garden-door, and ran to see her nurse Duval, as she always called my mother. I did not understand for a while that there was any prohibition on the Westons' part to Agnes visiting us, or know that there was such mighty wrath harboured against me in that house.

I was glad, for the sake of a peaceable life at home, as for honesty's sake too, that my mother did not oppose my determination to take no share in that smuggling business in which our house still engaged. Any one who opposed Mother in her own house had, I promise you, no easy time: but she saw that if she wished to make a gentleman of her boy, he must be no smuggler's apprentice; and when Monsieur le Chevalier, being appealed to, shrugged his shoulders and said he washed his hands of me: "*Eh bien*, Monsieur de la Motte!" says she, "we shall see if we can't pass ourselves of you and your patronage. I imagine that people are not always the better for it." "No," replied he, with a groan, and one of his gloomy looks, "my friendship may do people harm, but my enmity is worse—*entendez-vous?*" "Bah, bah!" says the stout old lady. "Denisot has a good courage of his own. What do you say to me about enmity to a harmless boy, Monsieur le Chevalier?"

I have told how, on the night of the funeral of Madame de Saverne, Monsieur de la Motte sent me out to assemble his Mackerel men. Among these was the father of one of my town playfellows, by name Hookham, a seafaring man, who had met with an accident at his business—strained his back—and was incapable of work for a time. Hookham was an improvident man; the rent got into arrears. My grandfather was his landlord, and I fear me, not the most humane creditor in the world. Now when I returned home after my famous visit to London, my patron, Sir Peter Denis, gave me two guineas, and my Lady made me a present of another. No doubt I should have spent this money had I received it sooner in London; but in our little town of Winchelsea

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there was nothing to tempt me in the shops, except a fowling-piece at the pawnbroker's, for which I had a great longing. But Mr. Triboulet wanted four guineas for the gun, and I had but three, and would not go into debt. He would have given me the piece on credit, and frequently tempted me with it, but I resisted manfully, though I could not help hankering about the shop, and going again and again to look at the beautiful gun. The stock fitted my shoulder to a nicety. It was of the most beautiful workmanship. "Why not take it now, Master Duval?" Monsieur Triboulet said to me: "and pay me the remaining guinea when you please. Ever so many gentlemen have been to look at it; and I should be sorry now, indeed I should, to see such a beauty go out of the town." As I was talking to Triboulet (it may have been for the tenth time), some one came in with a telescope to pawn, and went away with fifteen shillings. "Don't you know who that is?" says Triboulet (who was a chatterbox of a man). "That is John Hookham's wife. It is but hard times with them since John's accident. I have more of their goods here, and *entre nous*, John has a hard landlord, and quarter-day is just at hand." I knew well enough that John's landlord was hard, as he was my own grandfather. "If I take my three pieces to Hookham," thought I, "he may find the rest of the rent." And so he did; and my three guineas went into my grandfather's pocket out of mine; and I suppose some one else bought the fowling-piece for which I had so longed.

"What, it is *you* who have given me this money, Master Denis?" says poor Hookham, who was sitting in his chair, groaning and haggard with his illness. "I can't take it—I ought not to take it."

"Nay," said I; "I should only have bought a toy with it, and if it comes to help you in distress, I can do without my plaything."

There was quite a chorus of benedictions from the poor family in consequence of this act of good-nature; and I daresay I went away from Hookham's mightily pleased with myself and my own virtue.

It appears I had not been gone long when Mr. Joe Weston came in to see the man, and when he heard that I had relieved him, broke out into a flood of abuse against me, cursed me for a scoundrel and impertinent jackanapes, who was always giving myself the airs of a gentleman, and flew out of the house in a passion. Mother heard of the transaction, too, and pinched my ear with a grim satisfaction. Grandfather said nothing, but pocketed my three guineas when Mrs. Hookham brought them; and, though I did not brag about the matter much, everything is

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known in a small town, and I got a great deal of credit for a very ordinary good action.

And now, strangely enough, Hookham's boy confirmed to me what the Slindon priests had hinted to good Doctor Barnard. "Swear," says Tom (with that wonderful energy we used to have as boys)—"Swear, Denis, 'So help you, strike you down dead!' you never will tell!"

"So help me, strike me down dead!" said I.

"Well, then, those—you know who—the gentlemen—want to do you some mischief."

"What mischief can they do to an honest boy?" I asked.

"Oh, you don't know what they are," says Tom. "If they mean a man harm, harm will happen to him. Father says no man ever comes to good who stands in Mr. Joe's way. Where's John Wheeler, of Rye, who had a quarrel with Mr. Joe? He's in gaol. Mr. Barnes, of Playden, had words with him at Hastings market: and Barnes's ricks were burnt down before six months were over. How was Thomas Berry taken, after deserting from the man-of-war? He is an awful man, Mr. Joe Weston is. Don't get into his way. Father says so. But you are not to tell—no, never—that he spoke about it. Don't go alone to Rye of nights, Father says. Don't go on any—and you know what—any *fishing* business, except with those you know." And so Tom leaves me with a finger to his lip and terror in his face.

As for the *fishing*, though I loved a sail dearly, my mind was made up by good Doctor Barnard's advice to me. I would have no more night-fishing such as I had seen sometimes as a boy; and when Rudge's apprentice one night invited me, and called me a coward for refusing to go, I showed him I was no coward as far as fisticuffs went, and stood out a battle with him, in which I do believe I should have proved conqueror, though the fellow was four years my senior, had not his ally, Miss Sukey Rudge, joined him in the midst of our fight, and knocked me down with the kitchen bellows, when they both belaboured me, as I lay kicking on the ground. Mr. Elder Rudge came in at the close of this dreadful combat, and his abandoned hussy of a daughter had the impudence to declare that the quarrel arose because I was rude to her—I, an innocent boy, who would as soon have made love to a negress as to that hideous, pock-marked, squinting, crooked, tipsy Sukey Rudge. I fall in love with Miss Squintum, indeed! I knew a pair of eyes at home so bright, innocent, and pure, that I should have been ashamed to look in them had I been guilty of such a rascally treason. My little maid of Winchelsea heard of this battle, as she was daily hearing slanders against me from those *worthy* Mr.

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Westons; but she broke into a rage at the accusation, and said to the assembled gentlemen (as she told my good mother in after days), "Denis Duval is *not* wicked. He is brave and he is good. And it is not true, the story you tell against him. It is a lie!"

And now, once more it happened that my little pistol helped to confound my enemies, and was to me, indeed, a *gute Wehr und Waffen*. I was for ever popping at marks with this little piece of artillery. I polished, oiled, and covered it with the utmost care, and kept it in my little room in a box of which I had the key. One day, by a most fortunate chance, I took my schoolfellow, Tom Parrot, who became a great crony of mine, into the room. We went upstairs, by the private door of Rudge's house, and not through the shop, where Mademoiselle Figs and Monsieur the apprentice were serving their customers; and arrived in my room, we boys opened my box, examined the precious pistol, screw, barrel, flints, powder-horn, &c., locked the box and went away to school, promising ourselves a good afternoon's sport on that half-holiday. Lessons over, I returned home to dinner, to find black looks from all the inmates of the house where I lived, from the grocer, his daughter, his apprentice, and even the little errand-boy who blacked the boots and swept the shop stared at me impertinently, and said, "Oh, Denis, ain't you going to catch it!"

"What is the matter?" I asked, very haughtily.

"Oh, my Lord! we'll soon show your Lordship what is the matter." (This was a silly nickname I had in the town and at school, where, I believe, I gave myself not a few airs since I had worn my fine new clothes, and paid my visit to London.) "This accounts for his laced waistcoat, and his guineas which he flings about. Does your Lordship know these here shillings, and this half-crown? Look at them, Mr. Beales! See the marks on them which I scratched with my own hand before I put them into the till from which my Lord took 'em."

Shillings?—till? What did they mean? "How dare you ask, you little hypocrite!" screams out Miss Rudge. "I marked them shillings and that half-crown with my own needle, I did; and of that I can take my Bible oath."

"Well, and what then?" I asked, remembering how this young woman had not scrupled to bear false witness in another charge against me.

"What then? They were in the till this morning, young fellow; and you know well enough where they were found afterwards," says Mr. Beales. "Come, come! This is a bad job. This is a sessions job, my lad."

"But where *were* they found?" again I asked.

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"We'll tell you that before Squire Boroughs and the magistrates, you young vagabond!"

"You little viper, that have turned and stung me!"

"You precious young scoundrel!"

"You wicked little story-telling, good-for-nothing little thief!" cry Rudge, the apprentice, and Miss Rudge in a breath. And I stood bewildered by their outcry, and, indeed, not quite comprehending the charge which they made against me.

"The magistrates are sitting at the Town Hall now. We will take the little villain there at once," says the grocer. "You bring the box along with you, constable. Lord! Lord! what will his poor grandfather say?" And, wondering still at the charge made against me, I was made to walk through the streets to the Town Hall, passing on the way by at least a score of our boys, who were enjoying their half-holiday. It was market-day, too, and the town full. It is forty years ago, but I dream about that dreadful day still; and, an old gentleman of sixty, fancy myself walking through Rye market, with Mr. Beales's fist clutching my collar!

A number of our boys joined this dismal procession, and accompanied me into the magistrates' room. "Denis Duval up for stealing money!" cries one. "This accounts for his fine clothes," sneers another. "He'll be hung," says a third. The market people stare, and crowd round, and jeer. I feel as if in a horrible nightmare. We pass under the pillars of the Market House, up the steps to the Town Hall, where the magistrates were, who chose market-day for their sittings.

How my heart throbbed, as I saw my dear Doctor Barnard seated among them.

"Oh, Doctor," cries poor Denis, clasping his hands, "*you* don't believe me guilty?"

"Guilty of what?" cries the Doctor, from the raised table round which the gentlemen sat.

"Guilty of stealing."

"Guilty of robbing my till."

"Guilty of taking two half-crowns, three shillings and twopence in copper, all marked," shriek out Rudge, the apprentice, and Miss Rudge in a breath.

"Denny Duval steal sixpences!" cries the Doctor; "I would as soon believe he stole the dragon off the church-steeple!"

"Silence, you boys! Silence in the court there; or flog 'em and turn 'em all out," says the magistrates' clerk. Some of our boys—friends of mine—who had crowded into the place, were hurraying at my kind Doctor Barnard's speech.

"It is a most serious charge," says the clerk.

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"But what is the charge, my good Mr. Hickson? You might as well put me into the dock as that——"

"Pray, sir, will you allow the business of the court to go on?" asks the clerk testily. "Make your statement, Mr. Rudge, and don't be afraid of anybody. You are under the protection of the court, sir."

And now for the first time I heard the particulars of the charge made against me. Rudge, and his daughter after him, stated (on oath, I am shocked to say) that for some time past they had missed money from the till; small sums of money, in shillings and half-crowns, they could not say how much. It might be two pounds, three pounds, in all; but the money was constantly going. At last, Miss Rudge said, she was determined to mark some money, and did so; and that money was found in that box which belonged to Denis Duval, and which the constable brought into court.

"Oh, gentlemen!" I cried out in agony, "it's a wicked wicked lie, and it's not the first she has told about me. A week ago she said I wanted to kiss her, and she and Bevil both set on me; and I never wanted to kiss the nasty thing, so help me——"

"You did, you lying wicked boy!" cries Miss Sukey. "And Edward Bevil came to my rescue; and you struck me, like a low mean coward; and we beat him well and served him right, the little abandoned boy."

"And he kicked one of my teeth out—you did, you little villain!" roars Bevil, whose jaws had indeed suffered in that scuffle in the kitchen, when his precious sweetheart came to his aid with the bellows.

"He called me a coward, and I fought him fair, though he is ever so much older than me," whimpers out the prisoner. "And Sukey Rudge set upon me, and beat me too; and if I kicked him, he kicked me."

"And since this kicking match they have found out that you stole their money, have they?" says the Doctor, and turns round, appealing to his brother magistrates.

"Miss Rudge, please to tell the rest of your story," calls out the justices' clerk.

The rest of the Rudges' story was, that having their suspicions roused against me, they determined to examine my cupboards and boxes in my absence, to see whether the stolen objects were to be found, and in my box they discovered the two marked half-crowns, the three marked shillings, a brass-barrelled pistol, which were now in court. "Me and Mr. Bevil, the apprentice, found the money in the box; and we called my papa from the shop, and we fetched Mr. Beales, the constable, who lives over the way; and when the little monster came back from school, we seized upon him, and

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EVIDENCE FOR THE DEFENCE

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brought him before your worships, and hanging is what I said he would always come to," shrieks my enemy Miss Rudge.

"Why, I have the key of that box in my pocket now!" I cried out.

"We had means of opening it," says Miss Rudge, looking very red.

"Oh, if you have another key——" interposes the Doctor.

"We broke it open with the tongs and poker," says Miss Rudge, "me and Edward did—I mean Mr. Bevil, the apprentice."

"When?" said I, in a great tremor.

"When? When you was at school, you little miscreant! Half-an-hour before you came back to dinner."

"Tom Parrot, Tom Parrot!" I cried. "Call Tom Parrot, gentlemen. For goodness' sake call Tom!" I said, my heart beating so that I could hardly speak.

"Here I am, Denny," pipes Tom in the crowd; and presently he comes up to their honours on the bench.

"Speak to Tom, Doctor, dear Doctor Barnard!" I continued. "Tom, when did I show you my pistol?"

"Just before ten o'clock school."

"What did I do?"

"You unlocked your box, took the pistol out of a handkerchief, showed it to me, and two flints, a powder-horn, a bullet-mould, and some bullets, and put them back again, and locked the box."

"Was there any money in the box?"

"There was nothing in the box but the pistol, and the bullets and things. I looked into it. It was as empty as my hand."

"And Denis Duval has been sitting by you in school ever since?"

"Ever since—except when I was called up and caned for my Corderius," says Tom, with a roguish look; and there was a great laughter and shout of applause from our boys of Pocock's when this testimony was given in their schoolfellow's favour.

My kind Doctor held his hand over the railing to me, and when I took it, my heart was so full that my eyes overflowed. I thought of little Agnes. What would she have felt if her Denis had been committed as a thief? I had such a rapture of thanks and gratitude that I think the pleasure of the acquittal was more than equivalent to the anguish of the accusation. What a shout all Pocock's boys set up, as I went out of the justice-room! We trooped joyfully down the stairs, and there were fresh shouts and huzzays as we got down to the market. I saw Mr. Joe Weston buying corn at a stall. He only looked at me once. His grinding teeth and his clenched riding-whip did not frighten me in the least now.

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CHAPTER VII

THE LAST OF MY SCHOOLDAYS

AS our joyful procession of boys passed by Partlett's the pastry-cook's, one of the boys—Samuel Arbin—I remember the fellow well—a greedy boy, with a large beard and whiskers, though only fifteen years old—insisted that I ought to stand treat in consequence of my victory over my enemies. As far as a groat went, I said I was ready: for that was all the money I had.

"Oh, you story-teller!" cries the other. "What have you done with your three guineas which you were bragging about and showing to the boys at school? I suppose they were in the box when it was broken open." This Samuel Arbin was one of the boys who had jeered when I was taken in charge by the constable, and would have liked me to be guilty, I almost think. I am afraid I had bragged about my money when I possessed it, and may have shown my shining gold pieces to some of the boys in school.

"I know what he has done with his money!" broke in my steadfast crony Tom Parrot. "He has given away every shilling of it to a poor family who wanted it, and nobody ever knew *you* give away a shilling, Samuel Arbin," he says.

"Unless he could get eighteenpence by it!" sang out another little voice.

"Tom Parrot, I'll break every bone in your body, as sure as my name is Arbin!" cried the other, in a fury.

"Sam Arbin," said I, "after you have finished Tom, you must try me; or we'll do it now, if you like." To say the truth, I had long had an inclination to try my hand against Arbin. He was an ill friend to me, and amongst the younger boys a bully and a usurer to boot. The rest called out, "A ring! a ring! Let us go on the green and have it out!" being in their innocent years always ready for a fight.

But this one was never to come off: and (except in later days, when I went to revisit the old place, and ask for a half-holiday for my young successors at Pocock's) I was never again to see the ancient schoolroom. While we boys were brawling in the market-

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place before the pastrycook's door, Doctor Barnard came up, and our quarrel was hushed in a moment.

"What! fighting and quarrelling already?" says the Doctor sternly.

"It wasn't Denny's fault, sir!" cried out several of the boys. "It was Arbin began." And, indeed, I can say for myself that in all the quarrels I have had in life—and they have not been few—I consider I *always* have been in the right.

"Come along with me, Denny," says the Doctor, taking me by the shoulder: and he led me away and we took a walk in the town together, and as we passed old Ypres Tower, which was built by King Stephen, they say, and was a fort in old days, but is used as the town-prison now, "Suppose you had been looking from behind those bars now, Denny, and awaiting your trial at assizes? Yours would not have been a pleasant plight," Doctor Barnard said.

"But I was innocent, sir! You know I was!"

"Yes. Praise be where praise is due. But if you had not providentially been able to prove your innocence—if you and your friend Parrot had not happened to inspect your box, you would have been in yonder place. Ha! there is the bell ringing for afternoon service, which my good friend Doctor Wing keeps up. What say you? Shall we go and—and—offer up our thanks, Denny—for the—the immense peril from which—you have been—delivered?"

I remember how my dear friend's voice trembled as he spoke, and two or three drops fell from his kind eyes on my hand, which he held. I followed him into the church. Indeed and indeed I was thankful for my deliverance from a great danger, and even more thankful to have the regard of the true gentleman, the wise and tender friend, who was there to guide, and cheer, and help me.

As we read the last psalm appointed for that evening service, I remember how the good man, bowing his own head, put his hand upon mine; and we recited together the psalm of thanks to the Highest, who had had respect unto the lowly, and who had stretched forth His hand upon the furiousness of my enemies, and whose right hand had saved me.

Doctor Wing recognised and greeted his comrade when service was over: and the one Doctor presented me to the other, who had been one of the magistrates on the bench at the time of my trial. Doctor Wing asked us into his house, where dinner was served at four o'clock, and of course the transactions of the morning were again discussed. What could be the reason of the persecution against me? Who instigated it? There were matters connected with this story regarding which I *could* not speak. Should I do so, I must betray secrets which were not mine, and which impli-

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cated I knew not whom, and regarding which I must hold my peace. Now, they are secrets no more. That old society of smugglers is dissolved long ago: nay, I shall have to tell presently how I helped myself to break it up. Grandfather, Rudge, the Chevalier, the gentlemen of the Priory, were all connected in that great smuggling society of which I have spoken; which had its depôts all along the coast and inland, and its correspondents from Dunkirk to Havre de Grace. I have said as a boy how I had been on some of these "fishing" expeditions; and how, mainly by the effect of my dear Doctor's advice, I had withdrawn from all participation in this lawless and wicked life. When Bevil called me coward for refusing to take a share in a night-cruise, a quarrel ensued between us, ending in that battle royal which left us all sprawling, and cuffing and kicking each other on the kitchen floor. Was it rage at the injury to her sweetheart's teeth, or hatred against myself, which induced my sweet Miss Sukey to propagate calumnies against me? The provocation I had given certainly did not seem to warrant such a deadly enmity as a prosecution and a perjury showed must exist. Howbeit, there was a reason for the anger of the grocer's daughter and apprentice. They would injure me in any way they could; and (as in the beforementioned case of the bellows) take the first weapon at hand to overthrow me.

As magistrates of the county, and knowing a great deal of what was happening round about them, and the character of their parishioners and neighbours, the two gentlemen could not, then, press me too closely. Smuggled silk and lace, rum and brandy? Who had not these in his possession along the Sussex and Kent coast? "And, Wing, will you promise me there are no ribbons in your house but such as have paid duty?" asks one Doctor of the other.

"My good friend, it is lucky my wife has gone to her tea-table," replies Doctor Wing, "or I would not answer for the peace being kept."

"My dear Wing," continues Doctor Barnard, "this brandy punch is excellent, and is worthy of being smuggled. To run an anker of brandy seems no monstrous crime; but when men engage in these lawless ventures at all, who knows how far the evil will go? I buy ten kegs of brandy from a French fishing-boat, I land it under a lie on the coast, I send it inland ever so far, be it from here to York, and all my consignees lie and swindle. I land it, and lie to the revenue officer. Under a lie (that is, a mutual secrecy) I sell it to the landlord of 'The Bell' at Maidstone, say—where a good friend of ours, Denny, looked at his pistols. You

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remember the day when his brother received the charge of shot in his face? My landlord sells it to a customer under a lie We are all engaged in crime, conspiracy, and falsehood; nay, if the revenue looks too closely after us, we out with our pistols, and to crime and conspiracy add murder. Do you suppose men engaged in lying every day will scruple about a false oath in a witness-box? Crime engenders crime, sir. Round about *us*, Wing, I know there exists a vast confederacy of fraud, greed, and rebellion. I name no names, sir. I fear men high placed in the world's esteem, and largely endowed with its riches too, are concerned in the pursuit of this godless traffic of smuggling, and to what does it not lead them? To falsehood, to wickedness, to murder, to——"

"Tea, sir, if you please, sir," says John, entering. 'My mistress and the young ladies are waiting."

The ladies had previously heard the story of poor Denis Duval's persecution and innocence, and had shown him great kindness. By the time when we joined them after dinner, they had had time to perform a new toilette, being engaged to cards with some neighbours. I knew Mrs. Wing was a customer to my mother for some of her French goods, and she would scarcely, on an ordinary occasion, have admitted such a lowly guest to her table as the humble dressmaker's boy; but she and the ladies were very kind, and my persecution and proved innocence had interested them in my favour.

"You have had a long sitting, gentlemen," says Mrs. Wing: "I suppose you have been deep in politics, and the quarrel with France."

"We have been speaking of France and French goods, my dear," said Doctor Wing drily.

"And of the awful crime of smuggling and encouraging smuggling, my dear Mrs. Wing!" cries my Doctor.

"Indeed, Doctor Barnard!" Now Mrs. Wing and the young ladies were dressed in smart new caps, and ribbons, which my poor mother supplied; and *they* turned red, and I turned as red as the cap-ribbons, as I thought how my good ladies had been provided. No wonder Mrs. Wing was desirous to change the subject of conversation.

"What is this young man to do after his persecution?" she asked. "He can't go back to Mr. Rudge—that horrid Wesleyan who has accused him of stealing."

No, indeed, I could not go back. We had not thought about the matter until then. There had been a hundred things to agitate and interest me in the half-dozen hours since my apprehension and dismissal.

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The Doctor would take me to Winchelsea in his chaise. I could not go back to my persecutors, that was clear, except to reclaim my little property and my poor little boxes, which they had found means to open. Mrs. Wing gave me a hand, the young ladies a stately curtsey; and my good Doctor Barnard putting a hand under the arm of the barber's grandson, we quitted these kind people. I was not on the quarter-deck as yet, you see. I was but a humble lad belonging to ordinary tradesmen.

By the way, I had forgotten to say that the two clergymen, during their after-dinner talk, had employed a part of it in examining me as to my little store of learning at school, and my future prospects. Of Latin I had a smattering; French, owing to my birth, and mainly to Monsieur de la Motte's instruction and conversation, I could speak better than either of my two examiners, and with quite the good manner and conversation. I was well advanced, too, in arithmetic and geometry; and Dampier's Voyages were as much my delight as those of Sinbad or my friends Robinson Crusoe and Man Friday. I could pass a good examination in navigation and seamanship, and could give an account of the different sailings, working-tides, double-altitudes, and so forth.

"And you can manage a boat at sea, too?" says Doctor Barnard drily. I blushed, I suppose. I *could* do that, and could steer, reef, and pull an oar. At least I could do so two years ago.

"Denny, my boy," says my good Doctor, "I think 'tis time for thee to leave this school, at any rate, and that our friend Sir Peter must provide for thee."

However he may desire to improve in learning, no boy, I fancy, is very sorry when a proposal is made to him to leave school. I said that I should be too glad if Sir Peter, my patron, would provide for me. With the education I had, I ought to get on, the Doctor said, and my grandfather he was sure would find the means for allowing me to appear like a gentleman.

To fit a boy for appearance on the quarter-deck, and to enable him to rank with others, I had heard would cost thirty or forty pounds a year at least. I asked, did Doctor Barnard think my grandfather could afford such a sum?

"I know not your grandfather's means," Doctor Barnard answered, smiling. "He keeps his own counsel. But I am very much mistaken, Denny, if he cannot afford to make you a better allowance than many a fine gentleman can give his son. I believe him to be rich. Mind, I have no precise reason for my belief; but I fancy, Master Denis, your good Grandpapa's *fishing* has been very profitable to him."

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How rich was he? I began to think of the treasures in my favourite "Arabian Nights." Did Doctor Barnard think Grandfather was *very* rich? Well—the Doctor could not tell. The notion in Winchelsea was that old Mr. Peter was very well-to-do. At any rate, I must go back to him. It was impossible that I should stay with the Rudge family after the insulting treatment I had had from them. The Doctor said he would take me home with him in his chaise, if I would pack my little trunks; and with this talk we reached Rudge's shop, which I entered not without a beating heart. There was Rudge glaring at me from behind his desk, where he was posting his books. The apprentice looked daggers at me as he came up through a trap-door from the cellar with a string of dip-candles; and my charming Miss Susan was behind the counter tossing up her ugly head.

"Ho! he's come back, have he?" says Miss Rudge. "As all the cupboards is locked in the parlour, you can go in, and get your tea there, young man."

"I am going to take Denis home, Mr. Rudge," said my kind Doctor. "He cannot remain with you, after the charge which you made against him this morning."

"Of having our marked money in his box? Do you go for to dare for to say we put it there?" cries Miss, glaring now at me, now at Doctor Barnard. "Go to say that! Please to say that once, Doctor Barnard, before Mrs. Barker and Mrs. Scales" (these were two women who happened to be in the shop purchasing goods). "Just be so good for to say before these ladies, that we have put the money in that boy's box, and we'll see whether there is not justice in Hengland for a poor girl whom you insult, because you are a doctor and a magistrate indeed! Eh, if I was a man, I wouldn't let some people's gowns, and cassocks, and bands, remain long on their backs—that I wouldn't. And some people wouldn't see a woman insulted if they wasn't cowards!" As she said this, Miss Sukey looked at the cellar-trap, above which the apprentice's head had appeared, but the Doctor turned also towards it with a glance so threatening, that Bevil let the trap fall suddenly down, not a little to my Doctor's amusement.

"Go and pack thy trunk, Denny. I will come back for thee in half-an-hour. Mr. Rudge must see that after being so insulted as you have been, you never as a gentleman can stay in this house."

"A pretty gentleman, indeed!" ejaculates Miss Rudge. "Pray how long since was barbers gentlemen, I should like to know? Mrs. Scales mum, Mrs. Barker mum,—did you ever have your hair dressed by a gentleman? If you want for to have it, you must go to Mounseer Duval, at Winchelsea, which one of the name was

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hung, Mrs. Barker mum, for a thief and a robber, and he won't be the last neither."

There was no use in bandying abuse with this woman. "I will go and get my trunk, and be ready, sir," I said to the Doctor; but his back was no sooner turned than the raging virago opposite me burst out with a fury of words, that I certainly can't remember after five-and-forty years. I fancy I see now the little green eyes gleaming hatred at me, the lean arms akimbo, the feet stamping as she hisses out every imaginable imprecation at my poor head.

"Will no man help me, and stand by and see that barber's boy insult me?" she cried. "Bevil, I say—Bevil! 'Elp me!"

I ran upstairs to my little room, and was not twenty minutes in making up my packages. I had passed years in that little room, and somehow grieved to leave it. The odious people had injured me, and yet I would have liked to part friends with them. I had passed delightful nights there in the company of Robinson Crusoe, Mariner, and Monsieur Galland and his Contes Arabes, and Hector of Troy, whose adventures and lamentable death (out of Mr. Pope) I could recite by heart; and I had had weary nights, too, with my school-books, cramming that crabbed Latin grammar into my puzzled brain. With arithmetic, logarithms, and mathematics I have said I was more familiar. I took a pretty good place in our school with them, and ranked before many boys of greater age.

And now my boxes being packed (my little library being stowed away in that which contained my famous pistol), I brought them downstairs, with nobody to help me, and had them in the passage ready against Doctor Barnard's arrival. The passage is behind the back shop at Rudge's—(dear me! how well I remember it!) and a door thence leads into a side street. On the other side of this passage is the kitchen, where had been the fight which has been described already, and where we commonly took our meals.

I declare I went into that kitchen disposed to part friends with all these people—to forgive Miss Sukey her lies, and Bevil his cuffs, and all the past quarrels between us. Old Rudge was by the fire, having his supper; Miss Sukey opposite to him. Bevil, as yet, was minding the shop.

"I am come to shake hands before going away," I said.

"You're a-going, are you? And pray, sir, wherehever are you a-going of?" says Miss Sukey over her tea.

"I am going home with Doctor Barnard. I can't stop in this house after you have accused me of stealing your money."

"Stealing! Wasn't the money in your box, you little beastly thief?"

"Oh, you young reprobate, I am surprised the bears don't

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come in and eat you," groans old Rudge. "You have shortened my life with your wickedness, that you have; and if you don't bring your good grandfather's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, I shall be surprised, that I shall. You, who come of a pious family—I tremble when I think of you, Denis Duval!"

"Tremble! Faugh! the wicked little beast! he makes me sick, he do!" cries Miss Sukey, with looks of genuine loathing.

"Let him depart from among us!" cries Rudge.

"Never do I wish to see his ugly face again!" exclaims the gentle Susan.

"I am going as soon as Doctor Barnard's chaise comes," I said. "My boxes are in the passage now, ready packed."

"Ready packed, are they? Is there any more of our money in them, you little miscreant? Pa, is your silver tankard in the cupboard, and is the spoons safe?"

I think poor Sukey had been drinking to drive away the mortifications of the morning in the court-house. She became more excited and violent with every word she spoke, and shrieked and clenched her fists at me like a madwoman.

"Susanna, you have had false witness bore against you, my child; and you are not the first of your name. But be calm, be calm; it's our duty to be calm!"

"Eh!" (here she gives a grunt). "Calm with that sneak—that pig—that liar—that beast! Where's Edward Bevil? Why don't he come forward like a man, and flog the young scoundrel's life out?" shrieks Susanna. "Oh, with this here horsewhip, how I would like to give it you!" (She clutched her father's whip from the dresser, where it commonly hung on two hooks.) "Oh, you—you villain! you have got your pistol, have you? Shoot me, you little coward, I ain't afraid of you! You have your pistol in your box, have you?" (I uselessly said as much in reply to this taunt.) "Stop! I say, pa,—that young thief isn't going away with them boxes, and robbing the whole house as he may. Open the boxes this instant! We'll see he's stole nothing! Open them, I say!"

I said I would do nothing of the kind. My blood was boiling up at this brutal behaviour; and as she dashed out of the room to seize one of my boxes, I put myself before her, and sat down on it.

This was assuredly a bad position to take, for the furious vixen began to strike me and lash at my face with the riding-whip, and it was more than I could do to wrench it from her.

Of course, at this act of defence on my part, Miss Sukey yelled for help, and called out, "Edward! Ned Bevil! The coward is

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a-striking me! Help, Ned!" At this, the shop door flies open, and Sukey's champion is about to rush on me, but he breaks down over my other box with a crash of his shins, and frightful execrations. His nose is prone on the pavement; Miss Sukey is wildly laying about her with her horsewhip (and I think Bevil's jacket came in for most of the blows); we are all *higgledy-piggledy*, plunging and scuffling in the dark—when a carriage drives up, which I had not heard in the noise of action, and as the hall door opened, I was pleased to think that Doctor Barnard had arrived, according to his promise.

It was not the Doctor. The new-comer wore a gown, but not a cassock. Soon after my trial before the magistrates was over, our neighbour John Jephson, of Winchelsea, mounted his cart and rode home from Rye market. He straightway went to our house, and told my mother of the strange scene which had just occurred, and of my accusation before the magistrates and acquittal. She begged, she ordered Jephson to lend her his cart. She seized whip and reins; she drove over to Rye; and I don't envy Jephson's old grey mare that journey with such a charioteer behind her. The door, opening from the street, flung light into the passage; and behold, we three warriors were sprawling on the floor in the higgledy-piggledy stage of the battle as my mother entered!

What a scene for a mother with a strong arm, a warm heart, and a high temper! Madame Duval rushed instantly at Miss Susan, and tore her shrieking from my body, which fair Susan was pummelling with the whip. A part of Susan's cap and tufts of her red hair were torn off by this maternal Amazon, and Susan was hurled through the open door into the kitchen, where she fell before her frightened father. I don't know how many blows my parent inflicted upon this creature. Mother might have slain her, but that the chaste Susanna, screaming shrilly, rolled under the deal kitchen table.

Madame Duval had wrenched away from this young person the horsewhip with which Susan had been operating upon the shoulders of her only son, and snatched the weapon as her fallen foe dropped. And now my mamma, seeing old Mr. Rudge sitting in a ghastly state of terror in the corner, rushed at the grocer, and in one minute, with butt and thong, inflicted a score of lashes over his face, nose, and eyes, for which anybody who chooses may pity him. "Ah, you will call my boy a thief, will you? Ah, you will take my Denny before the justices, will you? Prends-moi ça, gredin! Attrape, lâche! Nimm noch ein Paar Schläge, Spitzbube!" cries out Mother, in that polyglot language of English, French, High-Dutch, which she always used when excited. My good mother

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could shave and dress gentlemen's heads as well as any man; and faith, I am certain that no man in all Europe got a better dressing than Mr. Rudge on that evening.

Bless me! I have written near a page to describe a battle which could not have lasted five minutes. Mother's cart was drawn up at the side-street whilst she was victoriously engaged within. Meanwhile, Doctor Barnard's chaise had come to the front door of the shop, and he strode through it, and found us conquerors in possession of both fields. Since my last battle with Bevil, we both knew that I was more than a match for him. "In the King's name, I charge you drop your daggers," as the man says in the play. Our wars were over on the appearance of the man of peace. Mother left off plying the horsewhip over Rudge; Miss Sukey came out from under the table; Mr. Bevil rose, and slunk off to wash his bleeding face; and when the wretched Rudge whimpered out that he would have the law for this assault, the Doctor sternly said, "You were three to one during part of the battle, three to two afterwards, and after your testimony to-day, you perjured old miscreant, do you suppose any magistrate will believe you?"

No. Nobody did believe them. A punishment fell on these bad people. I don't know who gave the name, but Rudge and his daughter were called Ananias and Sapphira in Rye; and from that day the old man's affairs seemed to turn to the bad. When our boys of Pocock's met the grocer, his daughter, or his apprentice, the little miscreants would cry out, "Who put the money in Denny's box?" "Who bore false witness against his neighbour?" "Kiss the book, Sukey my dear, and tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, do you hear?" They had a dreadful life, that poor grocer's family. As for that rogue Tom Parrot, he comes into the shop one market-day when the place was full, and asks for a penn'orth of sugar-candy, in payment for which he offers a penny to old Rudge sitting at his books behind his high desk. "It's a good bit of money," says Tom (as bold as the brass which he was tendering). "It *ain't marked*, Mr. Rudge, like Denny Duval's money!" And, no doubt, at a signal from the young reprobate, a chorus of boys posted outside began to sing, "Ananias, Ananias! He pretends to be so pious! Ananias and Saphia——" Well, well, the Saphia of these young wags was made to rhyme incorrectly with a word beginning with L. Nor was this the only punishment which befell the unhappy Rudge: Mrs. Wing and several of his chief patrons took away their custom from him and dealt henceforth with the opposition grocer. Not long after my affair, Miss Sukey married the toothless apprentice, who got a bad bargain with her, sweetheart or wife. I shall have

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to tell presently what a penalty they (and some others) had to pay for their wickedness; and of an act of contrition on poor Miss Sukey's part, whom, I am sure, I heartily forgive. Then was cleared up that mystery (which I could not understand, that Doctor Barnard could not, or would not) of the persecutions directed against a humble lad, who never, except in self-defence, did harm to any mortal.

I shouldered the trunks, causes of the late lamentable war, and put them into mother's cart, into which I was about to mount, but the shrewd old lady would not let me take a place beside her. "I can drive well enough. Go thou in the chaise with the Doctor. He can talk to thee better, my son, than an ignorant woman like me. Neighbour Jephson told me how the good gentleman stood by thee in the justice-court. If ever I or mine can do anything to repay him, he may command me. Houp, Schimmel! Fort! Shalt soon be to house!" And with this she was off with my bag and baggage, as the night was beginning to fall.

I went out of the Rudges' house, into which I have never since set foot. I took my place in the chaise by my kind Doctor Barnard. We passed through Winchelsea gate, and dipped down into the marshy plain beyond, with bright glimpses of the Channel shining beside us, and the stars glittering overhead. We talked of the affair of the day, of course—the affair most interesting, that is, to me, who could think of nothing but magistrates, and committals, and acquittals. The Doctor repeated his firm conviction that there was a great smuggling conspiracy all along the coast and neighbourhood. Master Rudge was a member of the fraternity (which, indeed, I knew, having been out with his people once or twice, as I have told, to my shame). "Perhaps there were other people of my acquaintance who belonged to the same society?" the Doctor said drily. "Gee up, Daisy! There were other people of my acquaintance, who were to be found at Winchelsea as well as at Rye. Your precious one-eyed enemy is in it; so, I have no doubt, is Monsieur le Chevalier de la Motte; so is—can you guess the name of any one besides, Denny?"

"Yes, sir," I said sadly; I knew my own grandfather was engaged in that traffic. "But if—if others are, I promise you, on my honour, I never will embark in it," I added.

"'Twill be more dangerous now than it has been. There will be obstacles to crossing the Channel which the contraband gentlemen have not known for some time past. Have you not heard the news?"

"What news?" Indeed I had thought of none but my own affairs. A post had come in that very evening from London, bringing intelligence of no little importance even to poor me, as it

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turned out. And the news was that His Majesty the King, having been informed that a treaty of amity and commerce had been signed between the Court of France and certain persons employed by His Majesty's revolted subjects in North America, "has judged it necessary to send orders to his Ambassador to withdraw from the French Court, . . . and relying with the firmest confidence upon the zealous and affectionate support of his faithful people, he is determined to prepare to exert, if it should be necessary, all the forces and resources of his kingdoms, which he trusts will be adequate to repel every insult and attack, and to maintain and uphold the power and reputation of this country."

So as I was coming out of Rye court-house, thinking of nothing but my enemies, and my trials, and my triumphs, post-boys were galloping all over the land to announce that we were at war with France. One of them, as we made our way home, clattered past us with his twanging horn, crying his news of war with France. As we wound along the plain, we could see the French lights across the Channel. My life has lasted for fifty years since then, and scarcely ever since, but for very very brief intervals, has that baleful war-light ceased to burn.

The messenger who bore this important news arrived after we left Rye, but riding at a much quicker pace than that which our Doctor's nag practised, overtook us ere we had reached our own town of Winchelsea. All our town was alive with the news in half-an-hour; and in the market-place, the public-houses, and from house to house, people assembled and talked. So we were at war again with our neighbours across the Channel, as well as with our rebellious children in America; and the rebellious children were having the better of the parent at this time. We boys at Pocock's had fought the war stoutly and with great elation at first. Over our maps we had pursued the rebels, and beaten them in repeated encounters. We routed them on Long Island. We conquered them at Brandywine. We vanquished them gloriously at Bunker's Hill. We marched triumphantly into Philadelphia with Howe. We were quite bewildered when we had to surrender with General Burgoyne at Saratoga; being, somehow, not accustomed to hear of British armies surrendering, and British valour being beat. "We had a half-holiday for Long Island," says Tom Parrot, sitting next to me in school. "I suppose we shall be flogged all round for Saratoga." As for those Frenchmen, we knew of their treason for a long time past, and were gathering up wrath against them. *Protestant* Frenchmen, it was agreed, were of a different sort; and I think the banished Huguenots of France have not been unworthy subjects of our new sovereign.

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There was one dear little Frenchwoman in Winchelsea who I own was a sad rebel. When Mrs. Barnard, talking about the war, turned round to Agnes and said, "Agnes, my child, on what side are you?" Mademoiselle de Barr blushed very red, and said, "I am a French girl, and I am of the side of my country. Vive la France! vive le Roi!"

"Oh, Agnes! oh, you perverted, ungrateful, little, little monster!" cries Mrs. Barnard, beginning to weep.

But the Doctor, far from being angry, smiled and looked pleased; and making Agnes a mock reverence, he said, "Mademoiselle de Saverne, I think a little Frenchwoman should be for France; and here is the tray, and we won't fight until after supper." And as he spoke that night the prayer appointed by his Church for the time of war—prayed that we might be armed with His defence who is the only Giver of all victory—I thought I never heard the good man's voice more touching and solemn.

When this daily and nightly ceremony was performed at the Rectory, a certain little person who belonged to the Roman Catholic faith used to sit aloof, her spiritual instructors forbidding her to take part in our English worship. When it was over, and the Doctor's household had withdrawn, Miss Agnes had a flushed, almost angry face.

"But what am I to do, Aunt Barnard?" said the little rebel. "If I pray for you, I pray that my country may be conquered, and that you may be saved and delivered out of our hands."

"No, faith, my child, I think we will not call upon thee for Amen," says the Doctor, patting her cheek.

"I don't know why you should wish to prevail over my country," whimpers the little maid. "I am sure I won't pray that any harm may happen to you, and Aunt Barnard, and Denny—never, never!" And in a passion of tears she buried her head against the breast of the good man, and we were all not a little moved.

Hand in hand we two young ones walked from the Rectory to the Priory House, which was only too near. I paused ere I rang at the bell, still holding her wistful little hand in mine.

"*You* will never be my enemy, Denny, will you?" she said, looking up.

"My dear," I faltered out, "I will love you for ever and ever!" I thought of the infant whom I brought home in my arms from the sea-shore, and once more my dearest maiden was held in them, and my heart throbbed with an exquisite bliss.

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CHAPTER VIII

I ENTER HIS MAJESTY'S NAVY

I PROMISE you there was no doubt or hesitation next Sunday regarding our good Rector's opinions. Ever since the war with America began, he had, to the best of his power, exhorted his people to be loyal, and testified to the authority of Cæsar. "War," he taught, "is not altogether an evil; and ordained of Heaven, as our illnesses and fevers doubtless are, for our good. It teaches obedience and contentment under privations; it fortifies courage; it tests loyalty; it gives occasion for showing mercifulness of heart; moderation in victory; endurance and cheerfulness under defeat. The brave who do battle victoriously in their country's cause leave a legacy of honour to their children. We English of the present day are the better for Crécy, and Agincourt, and Blenheim. I do not grudge the Scots their day of Bannockburn, nor the French their Fontenoy. Such valour proves the manhood of nations. When we have conquered the American rebellion, as I have no doubt we shall do, I trust it will be found that these rebellious children of ours have comported themselves in a manner becoming our English race, that they have been hardy and resolute, merciful and moderate. In that Declaration of War against France which has just reached us, and which interests all England, and the men of this coast especially, I have no more doubt in my mind that the right is on our side, than I have that Queen Elizabeth had a right to resist the Spanish Armada. In an hour of almost equal peril, I pray we may show the same watchfulness, constancy, and valour: bracing ourselves to do the duty before us, and leaving the issue to the Giver of all Victory."

Ere he left the pulpit, our good Rector announced that he would call a meeting for next market-day in our Town Hall—a meeting of gentry, farmers, and seafaring men, to devise means for the defence of our coast and harbours. The French might be upon us any day; and all our people were in a buzz of excitement, Volunteers and Fencibles patrolling our shores, and fishermen's glasses for ever on the look-out towards the opposite coast.

We had a great meeting in the Town Hall, and of the speakers

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it was who should be most loyal to King and country. Subscriptions for a Defence Fund were straightway set afoot. It was determined the Cinque Port towns should raise a regiment of Fencibles. In Winchelsea alone the gentry and chief tradesmen agreed to raise a troop of volunteer horse to patrol along the shore and communicate with depôts of the regular military formed at Dover, Hastings, and Deal. The fishermen were enrolled to serve as coast and look-out men. From Margate to Folkestone the coast was watched and patrolled: and privateers were equipped and sent to sea from many of the ports along our line. On the French shore we heard of similar warlike preparations. The fishermen on either coast did not harm each other as yet, though presently they too fell to blows: and I have sad reason to know that a certain ancestor of mine did not altogether leave off his relations with his French friends.

However, at the meeting in the Town Hall, Grandfather came forward with a subscription and a long speech. He said that he and his co-religionists and countrymen of France had now for near a century experienced British hospitality and freedom; that when driven from home by Papist persecution, they had found protection here, and that now was the time for French Protestants to show that they were grateful and faithful subjects of King George. Grandfather's speech was very warmly received; that old man had lungs, and a knack of speaking, which never failed him. He could spin out sentences by the yard, as I knew, who had heard him expound for half-hours together with that droning voice which had long ceased (Heaven help me!) to carry conviction to the heart of Grandfather's graceless grandson.

When he had done, Mr. George Weston, of the Priory, spoke, and with a good spirit too. (He and *my dear friend Mr. Joe* were both present, and seated with the gentlefolk and magistrates at the raised end of the hall.) Mr. George said that as Mr. Duval had spoken for the French Protestants, he, for his part, could vouch for the loyalty of another body of men, the Roman Catholics of England. In the hour of danger he trusted that he and his brethren were as good subjects as any Protestant in the realm. And as a trifling test of his loyalty—though he believed his neighbour Duval was a richer man than himself (Grandfather shrieked a "No, no!" and there was a roar of laughter in the hall)—he offered as a contribution to a defence fund to lay down two guineas for Mr. Duval's one!

"I will give my guinea, I am sure," says Grandfather, very meekly, "and may that poor man's mite be accepted and useful!"

"One guinea!" roars Weston; "I will give a hundred guineas!"

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"And I another hundred," says his brother. "We will show, as Roman Catholic gentry of England, that we are not inferior in loyalty to our Protestant brethren."

"Put my fazer-in-law Peter Duval down for one 'ondred guinea!" calls out my mother, in her deep voice. "Put me down for twenty-fife guinea, and my son Denis for twenty-fife guinea! We have eaten of English bread, and we are grateful, and we sing with all our hearts, God save King George!"

Mother's speech was received with great applause. Farmers, gentry, shopkeepers, rich and poor, crowded forward to offer their subscription. Before the meeting broke up, a very handsome sum was promised for the arming and equipment of the Winchelsea Fencibles; and old Colonel Evans, who had been present at Minden and Fontenoy, and young Mr. Barlow, who had lost a leg at Brandywine, said that they would superintend the drilling of the Winchelsea Fencibles, until such time as His Majesty should send officers of his own to command the corps. It was agreed that everybody spoke and acted with public spirit. "Let the French land!" was our cry. "The men of Rye, the men of Winchelsea, the men of Hastings, will have a guard of honour to receive them on the shore!"

That the French intended to try and land was an opinion pretty general amongst us, especially when His Majesty's proclamation came, announcing the great naval and military armaments which the enemy was preparing. We had *certain communications* with Boulogne, Calais, and Dunkirk still, and our fishing-boats sometimes went as far as Ostend. Our informants brought us full news of all that was going on in those ports; of the troops assembled there, and Royal French ships and privateers fitted out. I was not much surprised one night to find our old Boulogne ally Bidois smoking his pipe with Grandfather in the kitchen, and regaling himself with a glass of his own brandy, which I know had not paid unto Cæsar Cæsar's due. The pigeons on the hill were making their journeys still. Once, when I went up to visit Farmer Perreau, I found Monsieur de la Motte and a companion of his sending off one of these birds, and La Motte's friend said sulkily, in German, "What does the little *Spitzbube* do here?" "Versteht vielleicht Deutsch," murmured La Motte hurriedly, and turned round to me with a grin of welcome, and asked news of Grandfather and my mother.

This ally of the Chevalier's was a Lieutenant Lütterloh, who had served in America in one of the Hessian regiments on our side, and who was now pretty often in Winchelsea, where he talked magnificently about war and his own achievements, both on the Continent and in our American provinces. He lived near Canter-

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bury as I heard. I guessed, of course, that he was one of the "Mackerel" party, and engaged in smuggling, like La Motte, the Westons, and my graceless old grandfather and his ally, Mr. Rudge, of Rye. I shall have presently to tell how bitterly Monsieur de la Motte had afterwards to rue his acquaintance with this German.

Knowing the Chevalier's intimacy with the gentlemen connected with the Mackerel fishery, I had little cause to be surprised at seeing him and the German captain together; though a circumstance now arose, which might have induced me to suppose him engaged in practices yet more lawless and dangerous than smuggling. I was walking up to the hill—must I let slip the whole truth, madame, in my memoirs? Well, it never did or will hurt anybody; and, as it only concerns you and me, may be told without fear. I frequently, I say, walked up the hill to look at these pigeons, for a certain young person was a great lover of pigeons too, and occasionally would come to see Farmer Perreau's columbarium. Did I love the sight of this dear white dove more than any other? Did it come sometimes fluttering to my heart? Ah! the old blood throbs there with the mere recollection. I feel—shall we say how many years younger, my dear? In fine, those little walks to the pigeon-house are among the sweetest of all our stores of memories.

I was coming away, then, once from this house of billing and cooing, when I chanced to espy an old schoolmate, Thomas Measom by name, who was exceedingly proud of his new uniform as a private of our regiment of Winchelsea Fencibles, was never tired of wearing it, and always walked out with his firelock over his shoulder. As I came up to Tom, he had just discharged his piece, and hit his bird too. One of Farmer Perreau's pigeons lay dead at Tom's feet —one of the carrier pigeons, and the young fellow was rather scared at what he had done, especially when he saw a little piece of paper tied under the wing of the slain bird.

He could not read the message, which was written in our German handwriting, and was only in three lines, which I was better able to decipher than Tom. I supposed at first that the message had to do with the smuggling business, in which so many of our friends were engaged, and Measom walked off rather hurriedly, being by no means anxious to fall into the farmer's hands, who would be but ill pleased at having one of his birds killed.

I put the paper in my pocket, not telling Tom what I thought about the matter: but I did have a thought, and determined to converse with my dear Doctor Barnard regarding it. I asked to see him at the Rectory, and there read to him the contents of the paper which the poor messenger was bearing when Tom's ball brought him down.

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My good Doctor was not a little excited and pleased when I interpreted the pigeon's message to him, and especially praised me for my reticence with Tom upon the subject. "It may be a mare's nest we have discovered, Denny, my boy," says the Doctor; "it may be a matter of importance. I will see Colonel Evans on this subject to-night." We went off to Mr. Evans's lodgings: he was the old officer who had fought under the Duke of Cumberland, and was, like the Doctor, a justice of peace for our county. I translated for the Colonel the paper, which was to the following effect:—

[Left blank by Mr. Thackeray.]

Mr. Evans looked at a paper before him, containing an authorised list of the troops at the various Cinque Port stations, and found the poor pigeon's information quite correct. "Was this the Chevalier's writing?" the gentleman asked. No, I did not think it was Monsieur de la Motte's handwriting. Then I mentioned the other German in whose company I had seen Monsieur de la Motte: the Monsieur Lütterloh whom Mr. Evans said he knew quite well. "If Lütterloh is engaged in the business," said Mr. Evans, "we shall know more about it;" and he whispered something to Doctor Barnard. Meanwhile he praised me exceedingly for my caution, enjoined me to say nothing regarding the matter, and to tell my comrade to hold his tongue.

As for Tom Measom he was less cautious. Tom talked about his adventures to one or two cronies; and to his parents, who were tradesmen like my own. They occupied a snug house in Winchelsea, with a garden and a good paddock. One day their horse was found dead in the stable. Another day their cow burst and died. There used to be strange acts of revenge perpetrated in those days; and farmers, tradesmen, or gentry, who rendered themselves obnoxious to *certain parties*, had often to rue the enmity which they provoked. That my unhappy old grandfather was, and remained in the smugglers' league, I fear is a fact which I can't deny or palliate. He paid a heavy penalty to be sure, but my narrative is not advanced far enough to allow of my telling how the old man was visited for his sins.

There came to visit our Winchelsea magistrates Captain Pearson, of the *Serapis* frigate, then in the Downs; and I remembered this gentleman, having seen him at the house of my kind patron, Sir Peter Denis, in London. Mr. Pearson also recollected me as the little boy who had shot the highwayman; and was much interested when he heard of the carrier pigeon, and the news which

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he bore. It appeared that he, as well as Colonel Evans, was acquainted with Mr. Lütterloh. "You are a good lad," the Captain said; "but we know," said the Captain, "all the news those birds carry."

All this time our whole coast was alarmed, and hourly expectant of a French invasion. The French fleet was said to outnumber ours in the Channel: the French army, we knew, was enormously superior to our own. I can remember the terror and the excitement; the panic of some, the braggart behaviour of others; and especially I recall the way in which our church was cleared one Sunday, by a rumour which ran through the pews, that the French were actually landed. How the people rushed away from the building, and some of them whom I remember the loudest amongst the braggarts, and singing their "Come if you dare!" Mother and I in our pew, and Captain Pearson in the Rector's, were the only people who sat out the sermon, of which Doctor Barnard would not abridge a line, and which, I own, I thought was extremely tantalising and provoking. He gave the blessing with more than ordinary slowness and solemnity; and had to open his own pulpit-door and stalk down the steps without the accompaniment of his usual escort, the clerk, who had skipped out of his desk, and run away like the rest of the congregation. Doctor Barnard had me home to dinner at the Rectory; my good mother being much too shrewd to be jealous of this kindness shown to me and not to her. When she waited upon Mrs. Barnard with her basket of laces and perfumeries, Mother stood as became her station as a tradeswoman. "For thee, my son, 'tis different," she said. "I will have thee be a gentleman." And faith, I hope I have done the best of my humble endeavour to fulfil the good lady's wish.

The war, the probable descent of the French, and the means of resisting the invasion, of course formed the subject of the gentlemen's conversation; and though I did not understand all that passed, I was made to comprehend subsequently, and may as well mention facts here which only came to be explained to me later. The pigeons took over certain information to France, in return for that which they brought. By these and other messengers our Government was kept quite well instructed as to the designs and preparations of the enemy, and I remember how it was stated that His Majesty had occult correspondents of his own in France, whose information was of surprising accuracy. Master Lütterloh dabbled in the information line. He had been a soldier in America, a recruiting-crimp here, and I know not what besides: but the information he gave was given under the authority of his employers,

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to whom in return he communicated the information he received from France. The worthy gentleman was, in fact, a spy by trade; and though he was not born to be hanged, came by an awful payment for his treachery, as I shall have to tell in due time. As for Monsieur de la Motte, the gentlemen were inclined to think that his occupation was smuggling, not treason, and in that business the Chevalier was allied with scores, nay hundreds, of people round about him. One I knew, my pious grandpapa: other two lived at the Priory, and I could count many more even in our small town, namely, all the Mackerel men to whom I had been sent on the night of poor Madame de Saverne's funeral.

Captain Pearson shook me by the hand very warmly when I rose to go home, and I saw, by the way in which the good Doctor regarded me, that he was meditating some special kindness in my behalf. It came very soon, and at a moment when I was plunged in the very dismalest depths of despair. My dear little Agnes, though a boarder at the house of those odious Westons, had leave given to her to visit Mrs. Barnard; and that kind lady never failed to give me some signal by which I knew that my little sweetheart was at the Rectory. One day the message would be, "The Rector wants back his volume of the 'Arabian Nights,' and Denis had better bring it." Another time, my dearest Mrs. Barnard would write on a card, "You may come to tea, if you have done your mathematics well," or "You may have a French lesson," and so forth—and there, sure enough, would be my sweet little tutoress. How old, my dear, was Juliet when she and young Capulet began their loves? My sweetheart had not done playing with dolls when our little passion began to bud: and the sweet talisman of innocence I wore in my heart hath never left me through life, and shielded me from many a temptation.

Shall I make a clean breast of it? We young hypocrites used to write each other little notes, and pop them in certain cunning corners known to us two. Juliet used to write in a great round hand in French; Romeo replied, I daresay, with doubtful spelling.

We had devised sundry queer receptacles where our letters lay *poste restante*. There was the china pot-pourri jar on the Japan cabinet in the drawing-room. There, into the midst of the roses and spices, two cunning young people used to thrust their hands, and stir about spice and rose-leaves, until they lighted upon a little bit of folded paper more fragrant and precious than all your flowers and cloves. Then in the hall we had a famous post-office, namely, the barrel of the great blunderbuss over the mantelpiece, from which hung a ticket on which "loaded" was written, only I knew better, having helped Martin, the Doctor's man, to clean the gun. Then

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in the churchyard under the wing of the left cherub on Sir Jasper Billing's tomb, there was a certain hole in which we put little scraps of paper written in a cipher devised by ourselves, and on these scraps of paper we wrote:—well, can you guess what? We wrote the old song which young people have sung ever since singing began. We wrote "Amo, amas," &c., in our childish handwriting. Ah! thanks be to Heaven, though the hands tremble a little now, they write the words still! My dear, the last time I was in Winchelsea, I went and looked at Sir Jasper's tomb, and at the hole under the cherub's wing; there was only a little mould and moss there. Mrs. Barnard found and read one or more of these letters, as the dear lady told me afterwards, but there was no harm in them; and when the Doctor put on his *grand sérieux* (as to be sure he had a right to do), and was for giving the culprits a scolding, his wife reminded him of a time when he was captain of Harrow school, and found time to write other exercises than Greek and Latin to a young lady who lived in the village. Of these matters, I say, she told me in later days; in all days, after our acquaintance began, she was my truest friend and protectress.

But this dearest and happiest season of my life (for so I think it, though I am at this moment happy, most happy, and thankful) was to come to an abrupt ending, and poor Humpty Dumpty having climbed the wall of bliss, was to have a great and sudden fall, which, for a while, perfectly crushed and bewildered him. I have said what harm came to my companion Tom Measom, for meddling in Monsieur Lütterloh's affairs and talking of them. Now there were two who knew Meinherr's secret, Tom Measom, namely, and Denis Duval; and though Denis held his tongue about the matter, except in conversing with the Rector and Captain Pearson, Lütterloh came to know that I had read and explained the pigeon-despatch of which Measom had shot the bearer; and, indeed, it was Captain Pearson himself, with whom the German had sundry private dealings, who was Lütterloh's informer. Lütterloh's rage, and that of his accomplice, against me, when they learned the unlucky part I had had in the discovery, were still greater than their wrath against Measom. The Chevalier de la Motte, who had once been neutral, and even kind to me, was confirmed in a steady hatred against me, and held me as an enemy whom he was determined to get out of his way. And hence came that catastrophe which precipitated Humpty Dumpty Duval, Esquire, off the wall from which he was gazing at his beloved, as she disported in her garden below.

One evening—shall I ever forget that evening? It was Friday, [Left blank by Mr. Thackeray]—after my little maiden had been taking tea with Mrs. Barnard, I had leave to escort her

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to her home at Mr. Weston's at the Priory, which is not a hundred yards from the Rectory door. All the evening the company had been talking about battle and danger, and invasion, and the war news from France and America; and my little maiden sat silent, with her great eyes looking at one speaker, and another, and stitching at her sampler. At length the clock tolled the hour of nine, when Miss Agnes must return to her guardian. I had the honour to serve as her escort, and would have wished the journey to be ten times as long as that brief one between the two houses. "Good-night, Agnes!" "Good-night, Denis! On Sunday I shall see you!" We whisper one little minute under the stars; the little hand lingers in mine with a soft pressure; we hear the servants' footsteps over the marble floor within, and I am gone. Somehow, at night and at morning, at lessons and play, I was always thinking about this little maid.

"I shall see you on Sunday," and this was Friday! Even that interval seemed long to me. Little did either of us know what a long separation was before us, and what strange changes, dangers, adventures, I was to undergo ere I again should press that dearest hand.

The gate closed on her, and I walked away by the church-wall, and towards my own home. I was thinking of that happy, that unforgotten night of my childhood, when I had been the means of rescuing the dearest little maiden from an awful death; how, since then, I had cherished her with my love of love; and what a blessing she had been to my young life. For many years she was its only cheerer and companion. At home I had food and shelter, and, from Mother at least, kindness, but no society: it was not until I became a familiar of the good Doctor's roof that I knew friendship and kind companionship. What gratitude ought I not to feel for a boon so precious as there was conferred on me? Ah, I vowed, I prayed, that I might make myself worthy of such friends; and so was sauntering homewards, lost in these happy thoughts, when—when something occurred which at once decided the whole course of my after-life.

This something was a blow with a bludgeon across my ear and temple which sent me to the ground utterly insensible. I remember half-a-dozen men darkling in an alley by which I had to pass, then a scuffle and an oath or two, and a voice crying, "Give it him, curse him!" and then I was down on the pavement as flat and lifeless as the flags on which I lay. When I woke up, I was almost blinded with blood; I was in a covered cart with a few more groaning wretches; and when I uttered a moan, a brutal voice growled out with many oaths an instant order to be silent,

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or my head should be broken again. I woke up in a ghastly pain and perplexity, but presently fainted once more. When I awoke again to a half-consciousness I felt myself being lifted from the cart and carried, and then flung into the bows of a boat, where I suppose I was joined by the rest of the dismal cart's company. Then some one came and washed my bleeding head with salt-water (which made it throb and ache very cruelly). Then the man, whispering, "I'm a friend," bound my forehead tight with a handkerchief, and the boat pulled out to a brig that was lying as near to land as she could come, and the same man who had struck and sworn at me would have stabbed me as I reeled up the side, but that my friend interposed in my behalf. It was Tom Hookham, to whose family I had given the three guineas, and who assuredly saved my life on that day, for the villain who attempted it afterwards confessed that he intended to do me an injury. I was thrust into the forepeak with three or four more maimed and groaning wretches, and, the wind serving, the lugger made for her destination, whatever that might be. What a horrid night of fever and pain it was. I remember I fancied I was carrying Agnes out of the water; I called out her name repeatedly, as Tom Hookham informed me, who came with a lantern and looked at us poor wretches huddled in our shed. Tom brought me more water, and in pain and fever I slept through a wretched night.

In the morning our tender came up with a frigate that was lying off a town, and I was carried up the ship's side on Hookham's arm. The Captain's boat happened to pull from shore at the very same time, and the Captain and his friends, and our wretched party of pressed men with their captors, thus stood face to face. My wonder and delight were not a little aroused when I saw the Captain was no other than my dear Rector's friend, Captain Pearson. My face was bound up, and so pale and bloody as to be scarcely recognisable. "So, my man," he said, rather sternly, "you have been for fighting, have you? This comes of resisting men employed on his Majesty's service."

"I never resisted," I said; "I was struck from behind, Captain Pearson."

The Captain looked at me with a haughty surprised air. Indeed a more disreputable-looking lad he scarcely could see. After a moment he said, "Why, bless my soul, is it you, my boy? Is it young Duval?"

"Yes, sir," I said; and whether from emotion, or fever, or loss of blood and weakness, I felt my brain going again, and once more fainted and fell.

When I came to myself, I found myself in a berth in the

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DENIS'S VALET

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Serapis, where there happened to be but one other patient. I had had fever and delirium for a day, during which it appears I was constantly calling out, "Agnes, Agnes!" and offering to shoot highwaymen. A very kind surgeon's mate had charge of me, and showed me much more attention than a poor wounded lad could have had a right to expect in my wretched humiliating position. On the fifth day I was well again, though still very weak and pale; but not too weak to be unable to go to the Captain when he sent for me to his cabin. My friend the surgeon's mate showed me the way.

Captain Pearson was writing at his table, but sent away his secretary, and when the latter was gone shook hands with me very kindly, and talked unreservedly about the strange accident which had brought me on board his ship. His officer had information, he said, "and I had information," the Captain went on to say, "that some very good seamen of what we called the Mackerel party were to be taken at a public-house in Winchelsea," and his officer netted a half-dozen of them there, "who will be much better employed" (says Captain Pearson) "in serving the King in one of his Majesty's vessels, than in cheating him on board their own. You were a stray fish that was caught along with the rest. I know your story. I have talked it over with our good friends at the Rectory. For a young fellow, you have managed to make yourself some queer enemies in your native town; and you are best out of it. On the night when I first saw you, I promised our friends to take you as a first-class volunteer. In due time you will pass your examination, and be rated as a midshipman. Stay—your mother is in Deal. You can go ashore, and she will fit you out. Here are letters for you. I wrote to Doctor Barnard as soon as I found who you were."

With this, I took leave of my good patron and captain, and ran off to read my two letters. One, from Mrs. Barnard and the Doctor conjointly, told how alarmed they had been at my being lost, until Captain Pearson wrote to say how I had been found. The letter from my good mother informed me, in her rough way, how she was waiting at the "Blue Anchor Inn" in Deal, and would have come to me; but my new comrades would laugh at a rough old woman coming off in a shore boat to look after her boy. It was better that I should go to her at Deal, where I should be fitted out in a way becoming an officer in his Majesty's service. To Deal accordingly I went by the next boat; the good-natured surgeon's mate, who had attended me and taken a fancy to me, lending me a clean shirt, and covering the wound on my head neatly, so that it was scarcely seen under my black hair. "Le

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pauvre cher enfant! comme il est pâle!" How my mother's eyes kindled with kindness as she saw me! The good soul insisted on dressing my hair with her own hands, and tied it in a smart queue with a black ribbon. Then she took me off to a tailor in the town, and provided me with an outfit a lord's son might have brought on board. My uniforms were ready in a very short time. Twenty-four hours after they were ordered Mr. Levy brought them to our inn, and I had the pleasure of putting them on; and walked on the Parade, with my hat cocked, my hanger by my side, and Mother on my arm. Though I was perfectly well pleased with myself, I think she was the prouder of the two. To one or two tradesmen and their wives, whom she knew, she gave a most dignified nod of recognition this day; but passed on without speaking, as if she would have them understand that they ought to keep their distance when she was in such fine company. "When I am in the shop, I am in the shop, and my customers' very humble servant," said she; "but when I am walking on Deal Parade with thee, I am walking with a young gentleman in His Majesty's navy. And Heaven has blessed us of late, my child, and thou shalt have the means of making as good a figure as any young officer in the service." And she put such a great heavy purse of guineas into my pocket, that I wondered at her bounty. "Remember, my son," added she, "thou art a gentleman now. Always respect yourself. Tradespeople are no company for thee. For me 'tis different. I am but a poor hairdresser and shopkeeper." We supped together at the "Anchor," and talked about home, that was but two days off, and yet so distant. She never once mentioned my little maiden to me, nor did I somehow dare to allude to her. Mother had prepared a nice bedroom for me at the inn, to which she made me retire early, as I was still weak and faint after my fever; and when I was in my bed she came and knelt down by it, and with tears rolling down her furrowed face, offered up a prayer in her native German language, that He who had been pleased to succour me from perils hitherto, would guard me for the future, and watch over me in the voyage of life which was now about to begin. Now, as it is drawing to its close, I look back at it with an immense awe and thankfulness, for the strange dangers from which I have escaped, the great blessings I have enjoyed.

I wrote a long letter to Mrs. Barnard, narrating my adventures as cheerfully as I could, though, truth to say, when I thought of home and a little Someone there, a large tear or two blotted my paper, but I had reason to be grateful for the kindness I had received, and was not a little elated at being actually a gentleman, and in a fair way to be an officer in His Majesty's navy.

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As I was strutting on the Mall, on the second day of my visit to Deal, what should I see but my dear Doctor Barnard's well-known post-chaise nearing us from the Dover Road. The Doctor and his wife looked with a smiling surprise at my altered appearance; and as they stepped out of their chaise at the inn, the good lady fairly put her arms round me, and gave me a kiss. Mother, from her room, saw the embrace, I suppose. "Thou hast found good friends there, Denis, my son," she said, with sadness in her deep voice. "'Tis well. They can befriend thee better than I can. Now thou art well, I may depart in peace. When thou art ill, the old mother will come to thee, and will bless thee always, my son." She insisted upon setting out on her return homewards that afternoon. She had friends at Hythe, Folkestone, and Dover (as I knew well), and would put up with one or other of them. She had before packed my new chest with wonderful neatness. Whatever her feelings might be at our parting, she showed no signs of tears or sorrow, but mounted her little chaise in the inn yard, and, without looking back, drove away on her solitary journey. The landlord of the "Anchor" and his wife bade her farewell, very cordially and respectfully. They asked me, would I not step into the bar and take a glass of wine or spirits? I have said that I never drank either; and suspect that my mother furnished my host with some of these stores out of those fishing-boats of which she was owner. "If I had an only son, and such a good-looking one," Mrs. Boniface was pleased to say (can I, after such a fine compliment, be so ungrateful as to forget her name?)—"If I had an only son, and could leave him as well off as Mrs. Duval can leave you, *I* wouldn't send him to sea in war-time, that I wouldn't." "And though you don't drink any wine, some of your friends on board may," my landlord added, "and they are always welcome at the 'Blue Anchor.'" This was not the first time I had heard that my mother was rich. "If she be so," I said to my host, "indeed it is more than I know." On which he and his wife both commended me for my caution; adding with a knowing smile, "We know more than we tell, Mr. Duval. Have you ever heard of Mr. Weston? Have you ever heard of Monsieur de la Motte? We know where Boulogne is, and Ost——" "Hush, wife!" here breaks in my landlord. "If the Captain don't wish to talk, why should he? There is the bell ringing from the 'Benbow' and your dinner going up to the Doctor, Mr. Duval." It was indeed as he said, and I sat down in the company of my good friends, bringing a fine appetite to their table.

The Doctor on his arrival had sent a messenger to his friend Captain Pearson, and whilst we were at our meal, the Captain

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arrived in his own boat from the ship, and insisted that Doctor and Mrs. Barnard should take their dessert in his cabin on board. This procured Mr. Denis Duval the honour of an invitation, and I and my new sea-chest were accommodated in the boat and taken to the frigate. My box was consigned to the gunner's cabin, where my hammock was now slung. After sitting a short time at Mr. Pearson's table, a brother-midshipman gave me a hint to withdraw, and I made the acquaintance of my comrades, of whom there were about a dozen on board the *Serapis*. Though only a volunteer, I was taller and older than many of the midshipmen. They knew who I was, of course—the son of a shopkeeper at Winchelsea. Then, and afterwards, I had my share of rough jokes, you may be sure; but I took them with good-humour; and I had to fight my way as I had learned to do at school before. There is no need to put down here the number of black eyes and bloody noses which I received and delivered. I am sure I bore but little malice: and, thank Heaven, never wronged a man so much as to be obliged to hate him afterwards. Certain men there were who hated *me*: but they are gone, and I am here, with a pretty clear conscience, Heaven be praised; and little the worse for their enmity.

The first lieutenant of our ship, Mr. Page, was related to Mrs. Barnard, and this kind lady gave him such a character of her very grateful humble servant, and narrated my adventures to him so pathetically, that Mr. Page took me into his special favour, and interested some of my messmates in my behalf. The story of the highwayman caused endless talk and jokes against me, which I took in good part, and I established my footing among my messmates by adopting the plan I had followed at school, and taking an early opportunity to fight a well-known bruiser amongst our company of midshipmen. You must know they called me "Soapsuds," "Powderpuff," and like names, in consequence of my grandfather's known trade of hairdresser; and one of my comrades bantering me one day, cried, "I say, Soapsuds, where was it you hit the highwayman?" "There!" said I, and gave him a clean left-handed blow on his nose, which must have caused him to see a hundred blue lights. I know about five minutes afterwards he gave me just such another blow; and we fought it out and were good friends ever after. What is this? Did I not vow as I was writing the last page yesterday that I would not say a word about my prowess at fisticuffs? You see we are ever making promises to be good, and forgetting them. I suppose other people can say as much.

Before leaving the ship my kind friends once more desired to

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see me, and Mrs. Barnard, putting her finger to her lip, took out from her pocket a little packet, which she placed in my hand. I thought she was giving me money, and felt somehow disappointed at being so treated by her. But when she was gone to shore I opened the parcel, and found a locket there, and a little curl of glossy black hair. Can you guess whose? Along with the locket was a letter in French, in a large girlish hand, in which the writer said, that night and day she prayed for her dear Denis. And where, think you, the locket is now? where it has been for forty-two years, and where it will remain when a faithful heart that beats under it hath ceased to throb.

At gunfire our friends took leave of the frigate, little knowing the fate that was in store for many on board her. In three weeks from that day what a change! The glorious misfortune which befell us is written in the annals of our country.

On the very evening whilst Captain Pearson was entertaining his friends from Winchelsea, he received orders to sail for Hull, and place himself under the command of the Admiral there. From the Humber we presently were despatched northward to Scarborough. There had been not a little excitement along the whole northern coast for some time past, in consequence of the appearance of some American privateers, who had ransacked a Scottish nobleman's castle, and levied contributions from a Cumberland seaport town. As we were close in with Scarborough a boat came off with letters from the magistrates of that place, announcing that this squadron had actually been seen off the coast. The commodore of this wandering piratical expedition was known to be a rebel Scotchman; who fought with a rope round his neck to be sure. No doubt many of us youngsters vapoured about the courage with which we would engage him, and made certain, if we could only meet with him, of seeing him hang from his own yard-arm. It was *Diis aliter visum*, as we used to say at Pocock's; and it was we threw *deuceace* too. Traitor, if you will, was Monsieur John Paul Jones, afterwards knight of His Most Christian Majesty's Order of Merit; but a braver traitor never wore sword.

We had been sent for in order to protect a fleet of merchantmen that were bound to the Baltic, and were to sail under the convoy of our ship and the *Countess of Scarborough*, commanded by Captain Piercy. And thus it came about, that, after being twenty-five days in His Majesty's service, I had the fortune to be present at one of the most severe and desperate combats that has been fought in our or any time.

I shall not attempt to tell that story of the battle of the 23rd September, which ended in our glorious Captain striking his own

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colours to our superior and irresistible enemy. Sir Richard has told the story of his disaster in words nobler than any I could supply, who, though indeed engaged in that fearful action in which our flag went down before a renegade Briton and his motley crew, saw but a very small portion of the battle which ended so fatally for us. It did not commence till nightfall. How well I remember the sound of the enemy's gun of which the shot crashed into our side in reply to the challenge of our captain, who hailed her! Then came a broadside from us—the first I had ever heard in battle.

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NOTES ON DENIS DUVAL

THE readers of the *Cornhill Magazine* have now read the last line written by William Makepeace Thackeray. The story breaks off as his life ended—full of vigour, and blooming with new promise like the apple-trees in this month of May: * the only difference between the work and the life is this, that the last chapters of the one have their little pathetical gaps and breaks of unfinished effort, the last chapters of the other were fulfilled and complete. But the life may be left alone; while as for the gaps and breaks in his last pages, nothing that we can write is likely to add to their significance. There they are; and the reader's mind has already fallen into them, with sensations not to be improved by the ordinary commentator. If Mr. Thackeray himself could do it, that would be another thing. Preacher he called himself in some of the Roundabout discourses in which his softer spirit is always to be heard, but he never had a text after his own mind so much as these last broken chapters would give him *now*. There is the date of a certain Friday to be filled in, and Time is no more. Is it *very* presumptuous to imagine the Roundabout that Mr. Thackeray would write upon this unfinished work of his, if he could come back to do it? We do not think it is, or very difficult either. What Carlyle calls the divine gift of speech was so largely his, especially in his maturer years, that he made clear in what he *did* say pretty much what he *would* say about anything that engaged his thought; and we have only to imagine a discourse "On the Two Women at the Mill," † to read off upon our minds the sense of what Mr. Thackeray alone could have found language for.

Vain are these speculations—or are they vain? Not if we try to think what he would think of his broken labours, considering

* The last number of "Denis Duval" appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* of June 1864.

† "Two women shall be grinding at the mill, one shall be taken and the other left."

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that one of these days our labours must be broken too. Still, there is not much to be said about it: and we pass on to the real business in hand, which is to show as well as we may what "Denis Duval" would have been had its author lived to complete his work. Fragmentary as it is, the story must always be of considerable importance, because it will stand as a warning to imperfect critics never to be in haste to cry of any intellect, "His vein is worked out: there is nothing left in him but the echoes of emptiness." The decriers were never of any importance, yet there is more than satisfaction, there is something like triumph in the mind of every honest man of letters when he sees, and knows everybody must see, how a genius which was sometimes said to have been guilty of passing behind a cloud toward the evening of his day, came out to shine with new splendour before the day was done. "Denis Duval" is unfinished, but it ends *that* question. The fiery genius that blazed over the city in "Vanity Fair," and passed on to a ripe afternoon in "Esmond," is not a whit less great, it is only broader, more soft, more mellow and kindly, as it sinks too suddenly in "Denis Duval."

This is said to introduce the settlement of another too hasty notion which we believe to have been pretty generally accepted: namely, that Mr. Thackeray took little pains in the construction of his works. The truth is, that he very industriously *did* take pains. We find that out when we inquire, for the benefit of the readers of his Magazine, whether there is anything to tell of his designs for "Denis Duval." The answer comes in the form of many most careful notes, and memoranda of inquiry into minute matters of detail to make the story *true*. How many young novelists are there who *haven't* much genius to fall back upon, who yet, if they desired to set their hero down in Winchelsea a hundred years ago for instance, would take the trouble to learn how the town was built, and what gate led to Rye (if the hero happened to have any dealings with that place), and who were its local magnates, and how it was governed? And yet this is what Mr. Thackeray did, though his investigation added not twenty lines to the story and no "interest" whatever: it was simply so much conscientious effort to keep as near truth in feigning as he could. That Winchelsea had three gates, "Newgate on S.W., Landgate on N.E., Strandgate (*leading to Rye*) on S.E.;" that "the government was vested in a mayor and twelve jurats, jointly;" that "it sends canopy-bearers on occasion of a coronation," &c. &c. &c., all is duly entered in a note-book with reference to authorities. And so about the refugees at Rye, and the French Reformed Church there: nothing is written that history cannot vouch for. The neat and

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orderly way in which the notes are set down is also remarkable. Each has its heading, as thus:—

"*Refugees at Rye.*—At Rye is a small settlement of French refugees, who are for the most part fishermen, and have a minister of their own.

"*French Reformed Church.*—Wherever there is a sufficient number of faithful there is a church. The pastor is admitted to his office by the provincial synod, or the colloquy, provided it be composed of seven pastors at least. Pastors are seconded in their duties by laymen, who take the title of Ancients, Elders, and Deacons precentors. The union of Pastors, Deacons, and Elders forms a consistory."

Of course there is no considerable merit in care like this, but it is a merit which the author of "Denis Duval" is not popularly credited with, and therefore it may as well be set down to him. Besides, it may serve as an example to fledgeling geniuses of what *he* thought necessary to the perfection of his work.

But the chief interest of these notes and memoranda lies in the outlook they give us upon the conduct of the story. It is not desirable to print them all; indeed to do so would be to copy a long list of mere references to books, magazines, and journals, where such byway bits of illustration are to be found as lit Mr. Thackeray's mind to so vivid an insight into manners and character. Still, we are anxious to give the reader as complete an idea of the story as we can.

First, here is a characteristic letter, in which Mr. Thackeray sketches his plot for the information of his publisher:—

"My dear S——,—I was born in the year 1764, at Winchelsea, where my father was a grocer and clerk of the church. Everybody in the place was a good deal connected with smuggling.

"There used to come to our house a very noble French gentleman, called the Count de la Motte, and with him a German, the Baron de Lütterloh. My father used to take packages to Ostend and Calais for these two gentlemen, and perhaps I went to Paris once and saw the French queen.

"The squire of our town was Squire Weston of the Priory, who, with his brother, kept one of the genteelest houses in the country. He was churchwarden of our church, and much respected. Yes, but if you read the *Annual Register* of 1781, you will find that on the 13th July the sheriffs attended at the Tower of London to receive custody of a De la Motte, a prisoner charged

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with high treason. The fact is, this Alsatian nobleman being in difficulties in his own country (where he had commanded the Regiment Soubise), came to London, and under pretence of sending prints to France and Ostend, supplied the French Ministers with accounts of the movements of the English fleets and troops. His go-between was Lütterloh, a Brunswicker, who had been a crimping-agent, then a servant, who was a spy of France and Mr. Franklin, and who turned King's evidence on La Motte, and hanged him.

"This Lütterloh, who had been a crimping-agent for German troops during the American war, then a servant in London during the Gordon riots, then an agent for a spy, then a spy over a spy, I suspect to have been a consummate scoundrel, and doubly odious from speaking English with a German accent.

"What if he wanted to marry THAT CHARMING GIRL, who lived wih Mr. Weston at Winchelsea? Ha! I see a mystery here.

"What if this scoundrel, going to receive his pay from the English Admiral, with whom he was in communication at Portsmouth, happened to go on board the *Royal George* the day she went down?

"As for George and Joseph Weston, of the Priory, I am sorry to say they were rascals too. They were tried for robbing the Bristol mail in 1780; and being acquitted for want of evidence were tried immediately after on another indictment for forgery—Joseph was acquitted, but George was capitally convicted. But this did not help poor Joseph. Before their trials, they and some others broke out of Newgate, and Joseph fired at, and wounded, a porter who tried to stop him, on Snow Hill. For this he was tried and found guilty on the Black Act, and hung along with his brother.

"Now, if I was an innocent participator in De la Motte's treasons, and the Westons' forgeries and robberies, what pretty scrapes I must have been in!

"I married the young woman, whom the brutal Lütterloh would have had for himself, and lived happy ever after."

Here, it will be seen, the general idea is very roughly sketched, and the sketch was not in all its parts carried out. Another letter, never sent to its destination, gives a somewhat later account of Denis—

"My grandfather's name was Duval; he was a barber and perruquier by trade, and elder of the French Protestant church at Winchelsea. I was sent to board with his correspondent, a Methodist grocer, at Rye.

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"These two kept a fishing-boat, but the fish they caught was many and many a barrel of Nantz brandy, which we landed—never mind where—at a place to us well known. In the innocence of my heart, I—a child—got leave to go out fishing. We used to go out at night and meet ships from the French coast.

> "I learned to scuttle a marlinspike,
> reef a lee-scupper,
> keelhaul a bowsprit

as well as the best of them. How well I remember the jabbering of the Frenchmen the first night as they handed the kegs over to us! One night we were fired into by His Majesty's revenue cutter *Lynx*. I asked what those balls were fizzing in the water, &c.

"I wouldn't go on with the smuggling; being converted by Mr. Wesley, who came to preach to us at Rye—but that is neither here nor there. . . ."

In these letters neither "my mother" nor the Count de Saverne and his unhappy wife appear; while Agnes exists only as "that charming girl." Count de la Motte, the Baron de Lütterloh, and the Westons, seem to have figured foremost in the author's mind: they are historical characters. In the first letter, we are referred to the *Annual Register* for the story of De la Motte and Lütterloh: and this is what we read there—

"*January* 5, 1781.—A gentleman was taken into custody for treasonable practices, named Henry Francis de la Motte, which he bore with the title of baron annexed to it. He has resided in Bond Street, at a Mr. Otley's, a woollen draper, for some time.

"When he was going upstairs at the Secretary of State's office, in Cleveland Row, he dropped several papers on the staircase, which were immediately discovered by the messenger, and carried in with him to Lord Hillsborough. After his examination, he was committed a close prisoner for high treason to the Tower. The papers taken from him are reported to be of the highest importance. Among them are particular lists of every ship of force in any of our yards and docks, &c. &c.

"In consequence of the above papers being found, Henry Lütterloh, Esquire, of Wickham, near Portsmouth, was afterwards apprehended and brought to town. The messengers found Mr. Lütterloh ready booted to go a hunting. When he understood their business, he did not discover the least embarrassment, but delivered his keys with the utmost readiness. . . . Mr. Lütterloh is a German, and had lately taken a house at Wickham, within a

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few miles of Portsmouth; and as he kept a pack of hounds, and was considered as a good companion, he was well received by the gentlemen in the neighbourhood.

"*July* 14, 1781.—Mr. Lütterloh's testimony was of so serious a nature, that the court seemed in a state of astonishment during the whole of his long examination. He said that he embarked in a plot with the prisoner in the year 1778, to furnish the French Court with secret intelligence of the Navy; for which, at first, he received only eight guineas a month; the importance of his information appeared, however, so clear to the prisoner, that he shortly after allowed him fifty guineas a month, besides many valuable gifts; that, upon any emergency, he came post to town to Monsieur de la Motte, but common occurrences relative to their treaty, he sent by the post. He identified the papers found in his garden, and the seals, he said, were Monsieur de la Motte's, and well known in France. He had been to Paris by direction of the prisoner, and was closeted with Monsieur Sartine, the French Minister. He had formed a plan for capturing Governor Johnstone's squadron, for which he demanded 8000 guineas, and a third share of the ships, to be divided amongst the prisoner, himself, and his friend in a certain office, but the French Court would not agree to yielding more than an eighth share of the squadron. After agreeing to enable the French to take the commodore, he went to Sir Hugh Palliser, and offered a plan to take the French, and to defeat his original project with which he had furnished the French Court.

"The trial lasted for thirteen hours, when the jury, after a short deliberation, pronounced the prisoner guilty, when sentence was immediately passed upon him; the prisoner received the awful doom (he was condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered) with great composure, but inveighed against Mr. Lütterloh in warm terms. . . . His behaviour throughout the whole of this trying scene exhibited a combination of manliness, steadiness, and presence of mind. He appeared at the same time polite, condescending, and unaffected, and, we presume, could never have stood so firm and collected at so awful a moment, if, when he felt himself fully convicted as a traitor to the State which gave him protection, he had not, however mistakenly, felt a conscious innocence within his own breast that he had devoted his life to the service of his country.

. . . . . .

"M. de la Motte was about five feet ten inches in height, fifty years of age, and of a comely countenance; his deportment was exceedingly genteel, and his eye was expressive of strong penetra-

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tion. He wore a white cloth coat, and a linen waistcoat worked in tambour."—*Annual Register*, vol. xxiv. p. 184.

It is not improbable that from this narrative of a trial for high treason in 1781 the whole story radiated. These are the very men whom we have seen in Thackeray's pages; and it is a fine test of his insight and power to compare them as they lie embalmed in the *Annual Register*, and as they breathe again in "Denis Duval."* The part they were to have played in the story is already intelligible, all but the way in which they were to have confused the lives of Denis and his love. "'At least, Duval,' De la Motte said to me when I shook hands with him and with all my heart forgave him, 'mad and reckless as I have been and fatal to all whom I loved, I have never allowed the child to want, and have supported her in comfort when I myself was almost without a meal.'" What was the injury which Denis forgave with all his heart? Fatal to all whom he loved, there are evidences that De la Motte was to have urged Lütterloh's pretensions to Agnes: whose story at this period we find inscribed in the note-book in one word—"Henriette Iphigenia." For Agnes was christened Henriette originally, and Denis was called Blaise.

As for Monsieur Lütterloh, "that consummate scoundrel, and doubly odious from speaking English with a German accent"—having hanged De la Motte, while confessing that he had made a solemn engagement with him never to betray each other, and then immediately laying a wager that De la Motte *would* be hanged, having broken open a secretaire, and distinguished himself in various other ways—he seems to have gone to Winchelsea, where it was easy for him to threaten or cajole the Westons into trying to force Agnes into his arms. She was living with these people, and we know how they discountenanced her faithful affection for Denis. Overwrought by the importunities of Lütterloh and the Westons, she escaped to Doctor Barnard for protection; and soon unexpected

* Among the notes there is a little chronological table of events as they occur—

"Blaise, born 1763.
Henriette de Barr was born in 1766-7.
Her father went to Corsica, '68.
Mother fled, '68.
Father killed at B., '69.
Mother died, '70.
Blaise turned out, '79.
Henriette Ἰφιγενία, '81.
La Motte's catastrophe, '82.
Rodney's action, '82."

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help arrived. The De Viomesnils, her mother's relations, became suddenly convinced of the innocence of the Countess. Perhaps (and when we say perhaps, we repeat such hints of his plans as Mr. Thackeray uttered in conversation at his fireside) they knew of certain heritages to which Agnes would be entitled were her mother absolved: at any rate, they had reasons of their own for claiming her at this opportune moment—as they did. Agnes takes Doctor Barnard's advice and goes off to these prosperous relations, who, having neglected her so long, desire her so much. Perhaps Denis was thinking of the sad hour when he came home, long years afterwards, to find his sweetheart gone, when he wrote:—"O Agnes, Agnes! how the years roll away! What strange events have befallen us; what passionate griefs have we had to suffer; what a merciful Heaven has protected us, since that day when your father knelt over the little cot in which his child lay sleeping!"

At the time she goes home to France, Denis is far away fighting on board the *Arethusa*, under his old captain, Sir Richard Pearson, who commanded the *Serapis* in the action with Paul Jones. Denis was wounded early in this fight, in which Pearson had to strike his own colours, almost every man on board being killed or hurt. Of Pearson's career, which Denis must have followed in after days, there is more than one memorandum in Mr. Thackeray's note-book:—

"*Serapis*, R. Pearson. 'Beatson's Memoirs.'

"*Gentleman's Magazine*, 49, pp. 484. Account of action with Paul Jones, 1779.

"*Gentleman's Magazine*, 502, pp. 84. Pearson knighted, 1780

"Commanded the *Arethusa* off Ushant, 1781, in Kempenfeldt's action. } 'Field of Mars,' art. Ushant."

And then follows the question—

"*Qy.* How did Pearson get away from Paul Jones?"

But before that is answered we will quote the "story of the disaster" as Sir Richard tells it, "in words nobler than any I could supply;" and, indeed, Mr. Thackeray seems to have thought much of the letter to the Admiralty Office, and to have found Pearson's character in it.

After some preliminary fighting—

"We dropt alongside of each other, head and stern, when the fluke of our spare anchor hooking his quarter, we became so close, fore and aft, that the muzzles of our guns touched each other's sides. In this position we engaged from half-past eight till half

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past ten; during which time, from the great quantity and variety of combustible matter which they threw in upon our decks, chains, and, in short, every part of the ship, we were on fire no less than ten or twelve times in different parts of the ship, and it was with the greatest difficulty and exertion imaginable at times, that we were able to get it extinguished. At the same time the largest of the two frigates kept sailing round us the whole action and raking us fore and aft, by which means she killed or wounded almost every man on the quarter and main decks.

"About half-past nine, a cartridge of powder was set on fire, which, running from cartridge to cartridge all the way aft, blew up the whole of the people and officers that were quartered abaft the mainmast. . . . At ten o'clock they called for quarter from the ship alongside; hearing this, I called for the boarders and ordered them to board her, which they did; but the moment they were on board her they discovered a superior number laying under cover with pikes in their hands ready to receive them; our people retreated instantly into our own ship, and returned to their guns till past ten, when the frigate coming across our stern and pouring her broadside into us again, without our being able to bring a gun to bear on her, I found it in vain, and, in short, impracticable, from the situation we were in, to stand out any longer with the least prospect of success. I therefore struck. Our mainmast at the same time went by the board. . . .

"I am extremely sorry for the misfortune that has happened—that of losing His Majesty's ship I had the honour to command; but at the same time, I flatter myself with the hopes that their Lordships will be convinced that she has not been given away, but that on the contrary every exertion has been used to defend her."

The *Serapis* and the *Countess of Scarborough*, after drifting about in the North Sea, were brought into the Texel by Paul Jones; when Sir Joseph Yorke, our ambassador at the Hague, memorialised their High Mightinesses the States-General of the Low Countries, requesting that these prizes might be given up. Their High Mightinesses refused to interfere.

Of course the fate of the *Serapis* was Denis's fate; and the question also is, how did *he* get away from Paul Jones? A note written immediately after the query suggests a hairbreadth escape for him after a double imprisonment.

"Some sailors are lately arrived from Amsterdam on board the *Lætitia*, Captain March. They were taken out of the hold of a Dutch East Indiaman by the captain of the *Kingston* privateer,

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who, having lost some of his people, gained some information of their fate from a music-girl, and had spirit enough to board the ship and search her. The poor wretches were all chained down in the hold, and but for this would have been carried to perpetual slavery."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 50, pp. 101.

Do we see how truth and fiction were to have been married here? Suppose that Denis Duval, escaping from one imprisonment in Holland, fell into the snares of Dutch East Indiamen, or was kidnapped with the men of the *Kingston* privateer? Denis chained down in the hold, thinking one moment of Agnes and the garden wall which alone was too much to separate them, and at the next moment of how he was now to be carried to perpetual slavery, beyond hope. And then the music-girl; and the cheer of the *Kingston's* men as they burst into the hold and set the prisoners free. It is easy to imagine what those chapters would have been like.

At liberty, Denis was still kept at sea, where he did not rise to the heroic in a day, but progressed through all the commonplace duties of a young seaman's life, which we find noted down accordingly:—

"He must serve two years on board before he can be rated midshipman. Such volunteers are mostly put under the care of the gunner, who caters for them; and are permitted to walk the quarter-deck and wear the uniform from the beginning. When fifteen, and rated midshipmen, they form a mess with the mates. When examined for their commissions they are expected to know everything relative to navigation and seamanship, are strictly examined in the different sailings, working tides, days' works, and double-altitudes—and are expected to give some account of the different methods of finding the longitudes by a time-keeper and the lunar observations. In practical seamanship they must show how to conduct a ship from one place to another under every disadvantage of wind, tide, &c. After this, the candidate obtains a certificate from the captain, and his commission when he can get it."

Another note describes a personage whose acquaintance we have missed:—

"A seaman of the old school, whose hand was more familiar with the tar-brush than with Hadley's quadrant, who had peeped into the mysteries of navigation as laid down by J. Hamilton Moore, and who acquired an idea of the rattletraps and rigging of a ship through the famous illustrations which adorn the pages of Darcy Lever."

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Denis was a seaman in stirring times. "The year of which we treat," says the *Annual Register* for 1779, "presented the most awful appearance of public affairs which perhaps this country had beheld for many ages;" and Duval had part in more than one of the startling events which succeeded each other so rapidly in the wars with France and America and Spain. He was destined to come into contact with Major André, whose fate excited extraordinary sympathy at the time: Washington is said to have shed tears when he signed his death-warrant. It was on the 2nd of October 1780 that this young officer was executed. A year later, and Denis was to witness the trial and execution of one whom he knew better and was more deeply interested in, De la Motte. The courage and nobleness with which he met his fate moved the sympathy of Duval, whom he had injured, as well as of most of those who saw him die. Denis has written concerning him:—"Except my kind namesake, the captain and admiral, this was the first *gentleman* I ever met in intimacy, a gentleman with many a stain,—nay, crime to reproach him, but not all lost, I hope and pray. I own to having a kindly feeling towards that fatal man."

Lütterloh's time had not yet come; but besides that we find him disposed of with the *Royal George* in the first quoted letter, an entry in the note-book unites the fate of the bad man with that of the good ship.*

Meanwhile, the memorandum "Rodney's action, 1782," indicates that Duval was to take part in our victory over the French fleet commanded by the Count de Grasse, who was himself captured with the *Ville de Paris* and four other ships. "De Grasse with his suite landed on Southsea Common, Portsmouth. They were conducted in carriages to the 'George,' where a most sumptuous dinner had been procured for the Count and his suite, by Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Parkes, who entertained him and his officers at his own expense." Here also was something for Denis to see; and in this same autumn came on the trial of the two Westons, when Denis was to be the means—unconsciously—of bringing his old enemy, Joseph Weston, to punishment. There are two notes to this effect.

"1782–3. Jo. Weston, always savage against Blaise, fires on him in Cheapside.

"*The Black Act* is 9 George II. c. 22. The preamble says:—'Whereas several ill-designing and disorderly persons have associated themselves under the name of Blacks, and entered into confederacies

* Contemporary accounts of the foundering of the *Royal George* represent her crowded with people from the shore. We have seen how Lütterloh was among these, having come on board to receive the price of his treason.

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to support and assist one another in stealing and destroying deer, robbing warrens and fish-ponds.' . . . It then goes on to enact that 'if any person or persons shall wilfully or maliciously shoot at any person in any dwelling-house or other place, he shall suffer death as in cases of felony without benefit of the clergy.'"

A Joseph Weston was actually found guilty under the Black Act, of firing at and wounding a man on Snow Hill, and was hanged with his brother. Mr. Thackeray's note-book refers him to "The Westons in 'Session Papers' 1782, pp. 463, 470, 473;" to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1782; to "Genuine Memoirs of George and Joseph Weston, 1782;" and *Notes and Queries*, Series I. vol. x.*

The next notes (in order of time) concern a certain very disinterested action of Duval's:—

"*Deal Riots*, 1783.

"DEAL.—Here has been a great scene of confusion, by a party of Colonel Douglas's Light Dragoons, sixty in number, who entered the town in the dead of the night in aid to the excise officers, in order to break open the stores and make seizures: but the smugglers, who are never unprepared, having taken the alarm, mustered together, and a most desperate battle ensued."

Now old Duval, the perruquier, as we know, belonged to the great Mackerel party, or smuggling conspiracy, which extended all along the coast; and frequent allusion has been made to his secret stores, and to the profits of his so-called *fishing* expeditions. Remembering what has been written of this gentleman, we can easily imagine the falsehoods, tears, lying asseverations of poverty and innocence which old Duval must have uttered on the terrible night when the excise officers visited him. But his exclamations were to no purpose, for it is a fact that when Denis saw what was going on he burst out with the truth, and though he knew it was his own inheritance he was giving up, he led the officers right away to the hoards they were seeking.

His conduct on this occasion Denis has already referred to where he says:—"There were matters connected with this story

* These notes also appear in the same connection:—

"*Horse-Stealers.*—One Saunders was committed to Oxford gaol for horse-stealing, who appears to have belonged to a gang, part of whom stole horses in the north counties, and the other part in the south, and about the midland counties they used to meet and exchange.—*Gentleman's Magazine*, 39, 165.

"1783. *Capital Convictions.*—At the Spring Assizes, 1783, 119 prisoners received sentence of Death."

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regarding which I *could* not speak. . . . Now they are secrets no more. That old society of smugglers is dissolved long ago: nay, I shall have to tell presently how I helped myself to break it up." And therewith all old Duval's earnings, all Denis's fortune that was to be, vanished; but of course Denis prospered in his profession, and had no need of unlawful gains.*

But very sad times intervened between Denis and prosperity. He was to be taken prisoner by the French, and to fret many long years away in one of their arsenals. At last the Revolution broke out, and he may have been given up, or—thanks to his foreign tongue and extraction—found means to escape. Perhaps he went in search of Agnes, whom we know he never forgot, and whose great relations were now in trouble; for the Revolution which freed him was terrible to "aristocrats."

This is nearly all the record we have of this part of Denis's life, and of the life which Agnes led while she was away from him. But perhaps it was at this time that Duval saw Marie Antoinette;† perhaps he found Agnes, and helped to get her away: or had Agnes already escaped to England, and was it in the old familiar haunts—Farmer Perreau's *Columbarium*, where the pigeons were that Agnes loved; the Rectory garden basking in the autumn evening; the old wall and the pear-tree behind it; the plain from whence they could see the French lights across the Channel; the little twinkling window in a gable of the Priory-house, where the light used to be popped out at nine o'clock—that Denis and Agnes first met after their long separation?

However that may have been, we come presently upon a note of "a tailor contracts to supply three superfine suits for £11, 11s. (*Gazetteer* and *Daily Advertiser*);" and also of a villa at Beckenham, with "four parlours, eight bedrooms, stables, two acres of garden, and fourteen acres of meadow, let for £70 a year," which may have been the house the young people first lived in after they

* Notices of Sussex smuggling (says the note-book) are to be found in vol. x. of *Sussex Archæological Collections*, 69, 94. Reference is also made to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. viii. pp. 292, 172.

† The following memoranda appear in the note-book:—

"Marie Antoinette was born on the 2nd November 1755, and her saint's day is the FÊTE DES MORTS.

"In the Corsican expedition the Légion de Lorraine was under the Baron de Viomesnil. He emigrated at the commencement of the Revolution, took an active part in the Army of Condé, and in the emigration, returned with Louis XVIII., followed him to Gand, and was made marshal and peer of France after '15.

"Another Vi. went with Rochambeau to America in 1780."

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were married. Later, they moved to Fareport, where, as we read, the admiral is weighed along with his own pig. But he cannot have given up the service for many years after his marriage, for he writes:—"T'other day, when we took over the King of France to Calais (H.R.H. the Duke of Clarence being in command), I must needs have a post-chaise from Dover to look at that old window in the Priory-house at Winchelsea. I went through the old wars, despairs, tragedies. I sighed as vehemently after forty years as though the *infandi dolores* were fresh upon me, as though I were the schoolboy trudging back to his task and taking a last look at his dearest joy."

"And who, pray, was Agnes?" he writes elsewhere. "To-day her name is Agnes Duval, and she sits at her work-table hard by. The lot of my life has been changed by knowing her—to win such a prize in life's lottery has been given but to very few. What I have done—of any worth—has been done by trying to deserve her." . . . "*Monsieur mon fils*,"—(this is to his boy)—"if ever you marry, and have a son, I hope the little chap will have an honest man for a grandfather, and that you will be able to say, 'I loved him,' when the daisies cover me." Once more of Agnes he writes:—"When my ink is run out, and my little tale is written, and yonder church that is ringing to seven o'clock prayers shall toll for a certain D. D., you will please, good neighbours, to remember that I never loved any but yonder lady, and keep a place by Darby for Joan when her turn shall arrive."

THE END

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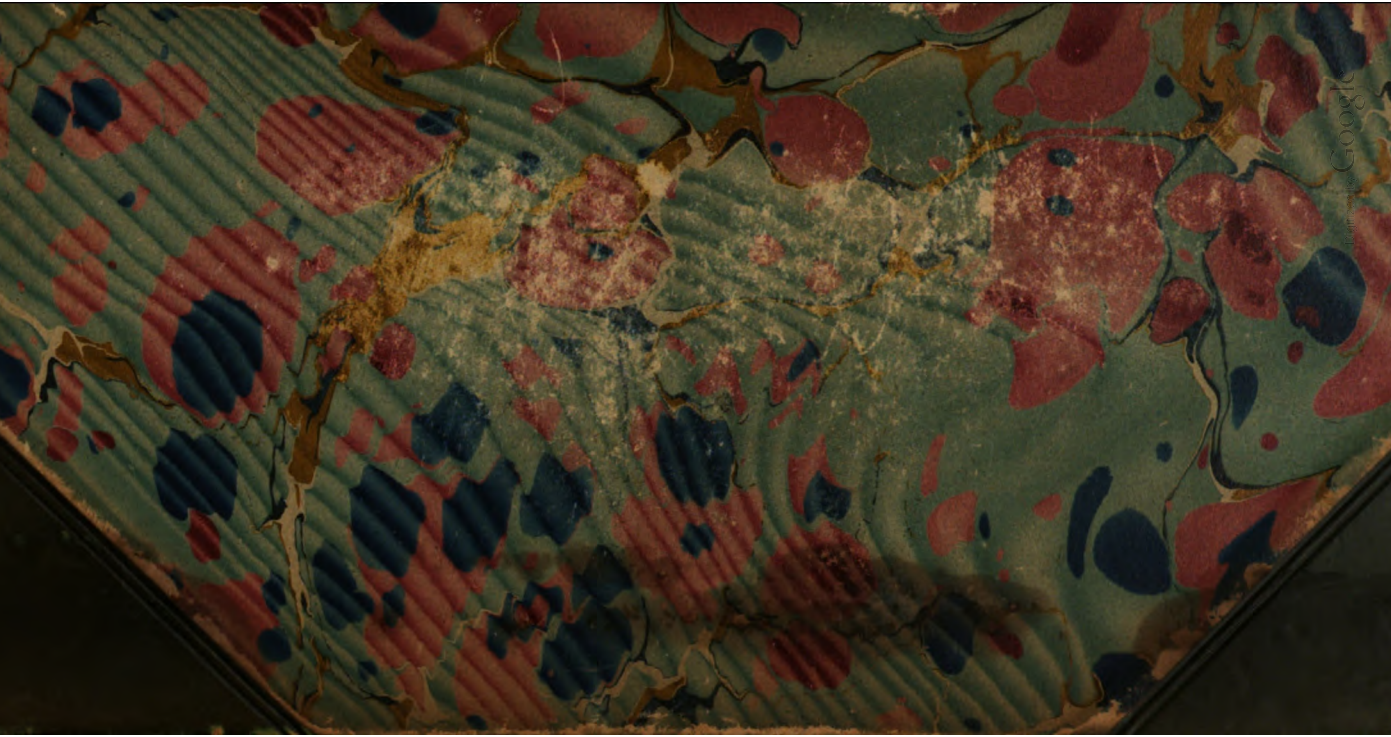
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